

**Label: "FOIA/FOIA OS-2018-01430"**

**Created by:susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov**

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Created: 08-03-2018 at 13:36 PM

# Conversation Contents

**Fwd: Monthly Meeting: Slides**

**Attachments:**

/30. Fwd: Monthly Meeting: Slides/1.1 5-9-18 Monthly Meeting.pptx

**Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Mon Jun 11 2018 09:51:56 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** maureen\_foster@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Fwd: Monthly Meeting: Slides  
**Attachments:** 5-9-18 Monthly Meeting.pptx

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Boulton, Caroline" <[caroline\\_boulton@ios.doi.gov](mailto:caroline_boulton@ios.doi.gov)>  
**To:** John Tahsuda <[john.tahsuda@bia.gov](mailto:john.tahsuda@bia.gov)>, John Tanner <[john\\_tanner@ios.doi.gov](mailto:john_tanner@ios.doi.gov)>, Joseph Balash <[joseph\\_balash@ios.doi.gov](mailto:joseph_balash@ios.doi.gov)>, Rick May <[rick\\_may@ios.doi.gov](mailto:rick_may@ios.doi.gov)>, Scott Cameron <[scott\\_cameron@ios.doi.gov](mailto:scott_cameron@ios.doi.gov)>, Steven Howke <[steven\\_howke@ios.doi.gov](mailto:steven_howke@ios.doi.gov)>, Timothy Petty <[timothy\\_petty@ios.doi.gov](mailto:timothy_petty@ios.doi.gov)>, Vincent DeVito <[vincent\\_devito@ios.doi.gov](mailto:vincent_devito@ios.doi.gov)>, Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Cc:** Billy Dove <[william\\_dove@ios.doi.gov](mailto:william_dove@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Subject:** **Monthly Meeting: Slides**

Hi all,

I apologize very much for the late notice; with Aaron officially out of the scheduling office, there was some confusion as to who would be handling the monthly policy meeting slides. I will be coordinating this month.

This week's monthly policy meeting is this Wednesday at 9:30. The Secretary will be out of town; the meeting will be run by the Deputy Secretary.

Downey would like to review all slides before they go to the Deputy Secretary. Slides for this month's presentation are due at **12:00 noon tomorrow**. The slides from May are attached here.

If you are unable to attend, please let me know who will be presenting for your hallway.

Best,  
Caroline

--

Caroline Boulton  
Special Assistant to the Secretary  
Immediate Office of the Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
202.208.5403

# Conversation Contents

## Monthly Meeting: Slides

### Attachments:

/31. Monthly Meeting: Slides/1.1 5-9-18 Monthly Meeting.pptx

**"Boulton, Caroline" <caroline\_boulton@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Boulton, Caroline" <caroline\_boulton@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Mon Jun 11 2018 09:39:53 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
John Tahsuda <john.tahsuda@bia.gov>, John Tanner <john\_tanner@ios.doi.gov>, Joseph Balash <joseph\_balash@ios.doi.gov>, Rick May <rick\_may@ios.doi.gov>, Scott Cameron <scott\_cameron@ios.doi.gov>, Steven Howke <steven\_howke@ios.doi.gov>, Timothy Petty <timothy\_petty@ios.doi.gov>, Vincent DeVito <vincent\_devito@ios.doi.gov>, Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**To:**  
**CC:** Billy Dove <william\_dove@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Monthly Meeting: Slides  
**Attachments:** 5-9-18 Monthly Meeting.pptx

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## Monthly Policy Briefing for Secretary Zinke



### Agenda

1. Secretary's Travel
2. Land and Minerals Management
3. Water and Science
4. Insular, International, Oceans
5. Policy, Management, and Budget
6. Fish and Wildlife and Parks
7. Indian Affairs
8. Congressional & Legislative Affairs
9. Grants
10. Recreation
11. Special Projects



## Secretary's Travel

### MAY

- MT, ND, SD, WY Trip 5/18-5/28
  - Rocky Boy Reservation
  - Fort Belknap Reservation
  - Fort Peck Reservation
  - Williston, ND
  - Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nations
  - Teddy Roosevelt National Park
  - Bismark, ND
    - Remarks at Williston Basin Petroleum Conference
- Standing Rock Reservation
- Cheyenne River Reservation
- Wall, SD
  - Great Plains Tribal Association
- Devil's Tower National Monument
- Rapid City, SD
- Black Hills National Cemetery
  - Memorial Day Event



## Land and Minerals Management



## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### BLM

- Finalize venting and flaring
- Finalize hydraulic fracturing
- Revise Onshore Orders 3, 4, 5
- Complete sage grouse planning effort
- Issue rights of way for major transmission and pipelines project
- Law enforcement reform
- Increase Western timber harvest
- Timber categorical exclusions
- Alaska 1002 lease sale
- Establish strategy to streamline permits
- Wild horse and burros
- Adjust RMPs:
  - 68 Sage Grouse RMPs
  - Monument RMPs
  - Energy Focused RMPs
  - Eastern Interior RMP
  - NPR-A IAP

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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### BLM

- Complete scoping report for management plans of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments (Mid-Late May)
- Send the 60 Day Report in SO 3359 Critical Mineral Independence and Security to the Secretary.
- Publish Enefit NOA for the ROW EIS in the Federal Register to provide access to power lines, water and other resources to privately owned oil shale project. (May 7-11)
- Conduct public scoping meetings on Coastal Plain EIS (Comment Period Closes 6/19)
- Conduct stakeholder workshops and energy corridor reviews for Section 368 Energy Corridors (May 16- June 13)
- Process waste prevention rule comments and finalize waste prevention rule
- Publish Alton Coal Final EIS

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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### BLM

- RMP Revisions or Amendments
  - Carlsbad RMP
  - 68 Sage Grouse RMPs
  - Monument RMPs
  - Eastern Interior RMP
  - NPR-A IAP
- Major EISs
  - GMT-2 Alaska Supplemental EIS
  - Alton Coal Utah
  - Phosphate Mines (3) Idaho
  - 1002 Alaska
  - Road To Ambler Alaska
  - Gold Rock Mine Nevada
  - Phoenix Mine Expansion Nevada
- Hold Quarterly Oil and Gas Lease Sales
- Implement Strategy to Streamline Planning and Permitting
- Finalize Venting and Flaring
- Revise Onshore Orders 3, 4, 5
- Increase Western Timber Harvest

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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### BOEM

- Five Year National OCS Program
- G&G Permits
- Financial Assurance/Review of Notice to Lessees 2016-N01
- Liberty Project Project
- Offshore Air Regulations
- Offshore Wind Construction and Operation Plan Submitted and Reviewed





## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### BOEM

- On May 8, BOEM briefed the ASLM on comment highlights and options guidance for the **2019-2024 Proposed Program**. Subsequent briefings for DOI leadership are planned for the week of May 14. BOEM is currently working on the analyses for both the upcoming Proposed Program document and the associated Programmatic EIS.
- BOEM has extended the comment period for the **Call for Information and Nominations for a Beaufort Sea Oil and Gas Lease Sale**. The Call comment period originally closed on April 30 but will remain open until May 30, 2018.
- **Financial Assurance/Review of Notice to Lessees 2016-N01**: BOEM is preparing a concept paper for DOI leadership review on a path moving forward. It is expected to be submitted to the Department by May 11<sup>th</sup>.
- In May, BOEM expects that NMFS will publish its ESA BiOP for 8 Atlantic G&G permit applications under review by BOEM. If so, BOEM could issue permits for **Atlantic G&G** activities by late May.



## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### BOEM

- Later this Spring, Deepwater Wind is expected to submit a **Construction and Operations Plan (COP)** for their South Fork project located offshore New York. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for this COP is in surnaming.
- **Five Year National OCS Program**: In October, the Secretary will be briefed on the draft PEIS and Proposed Program analyses. Once decisions are made by the Secretary, the Proposed Program and associated DEIS are scheduled to publish in November 2018.
- **Mid and South Atlantic 2020 Lease Sale**: The Call for Information and Nominations will need to publish later this Fall.



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### OSMRE

- Finish consultation after rescinded Stream Protection Rule
- Increase efficiency for plan reviews on state regulatory programs
- Support state and tribal primacy
- Strategy to implement coal report recommendations



## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### OSMRE

- AML Pilot Funds available (by May 22)
- Falkirk Mine Plan decision documents
- Bull Mountains Mine #1 decision documents



## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### OSMRE

- **Regulatory Burdens:**  
Repeal internal directives and memorandums from previous administration.
- **Faster Permitting:**  
Streamline the processes for mine plan and state regulatory programs.



## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### BSEE

- Regulatory Reform
  - Promulgate Final Well Control Rule
  - Promulgate Final Production Safety Systems Rule
  - Revise Arctic Rule
- Process Reform
  - Permit process reform
  - Validate high pressure/high temperature operational plans
  - Seek third party certification of BSEE's processes
  - Improve decommissioning strategy
  - Implement Risk-based Inspections and Revised Inspection Strategy
- Workforce Culture Improvements



## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### BSEE

- Publish Revised Well Control Rule in Federal Register
- Publish Final Rule for the Production Safety Systems Rule in Federal Register.
- Initiate Pilot for Accelerated Compliance Together (ACT) Program



## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### BSEE

- Commence Revision of Original Arctic Rule
- Finalize New Inspection Strategy
- Complete Various Change Management Initiatives
  - Inspection and Enforcement Program Review and Certification
  - High Pressure/ High Temperature Formation Review
  - Review BSEE Veteran's Program
  - Initiate OCS Condition Reporting System
  - Identify, finalize and populate BSEE Vital Statistics Report
  - Increase percentage participation for the SafeOCS Program





## Water and Science



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### Bureau of Reclamation

- Creating new water storage under WIIN or other authorities – shovel in ground
- Maximize water supply for Central Valley Project operations - 1 million AF of water storage in California
- Reducing waste, fraud and abuse
- Broaden focus for ESA re-consultation on California's CVP
- Increase hydropower opportunities
- Continue cultural shift back to infrastructure development
- Title transfer authorities
- Drought contingency for Colorado River



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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### Bureau of Reclamation

- (b) (5) [REDACTED]
- Presentation of Secretary's Commendation Awards to five Reclamation employees who saved drowning boater (awarded in November 2017).
  - Deputy Secretary to present awards at 2018 Spring Association for California Water Agencies Conference in Sacramento, CA
- Lake Nighthorse opening for Recreation.
  - Commissioner Burman to attend ceremony on May 14.
- Hydrology Update:
  - Colorado River Basin, Klamath River Basin, Middle Rio Grande River Basin

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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### Bureau of Reclamation

- Title Transfer authorities:
  - Work underway to develop categorical exclusion under NEPA
- Experimental Flow to be conducted under LTEMP = Macroinvertebrate Production Flows (Bug Flows):
  - LTEMP (Long-Term Experimental Management Plan) to proceed with "Bug Flows" between May 1 and August 31, 2018, to test effectiveness of improving insect production.
- Continue pre-construction activities at Shasta Dam
  - Begin biological assessment, cultural resources compliance, supplemental EIS, geotechnical data collection.

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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### USGS

- Each bureau should track money going to studies
- Prioritize studies to conform with Secretarial priorities and conservation efforts
- Push priorities in director's guidance to centers
- Update scientific integrity document
- Energy Assessments – Alaska North Slope
- Alaska Mapping
- Climate policy
- Critical Minerals
- Landsat 9 and 10

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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### USGS

- New Director Arrives (May 14, 2018)
  - USGS Honor Awards Ceremony
  - USGS Town Hall to Welcome Dr. James Reilly
- Critical Minerals - SO 3359
  - Federal Register Notice to announce the Final Critical Minerals List (May 18, 2018)
- Kilauea Volcano Eruption
  - Current activity and USGS response activity
- National Imagery Summit May
  - FGDC, USDA and Interior will host a National Imagery Summit at the USGS National Center.

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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### USGS

- Energy Assessments – North Slope
  - Begin State lands assessment, to be complete Dec 2019.
- USGS Executive Leadership Team Meeting (June 12-14)
- National Geospatial Advisory Committee Meeting (June 26-27)

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## Insular, International, Oceans (Hurricane Recovery)





## 2018 Top Policy Goals Insular Affairs

Strengthen economic capacities in the US Territories, and fulfill US compact obligations to the freely associated states.

- U.S. Congress and President Trump funded the Palau Compact Agreement in the 2018 Omnibus Funding Bill, Provides \$123 Million through 2024.
- Provided \$10.6 Million in Grant Funding to American Samoa for Training, Infrastructure at Wharf, Schools, and Hospital.
- Provided \$6.9 Million in Grant Funding to Guam for upgrades to facilities, assessments for schools, and computer system upgrades.
- Provided \$5.6 Million in Grant Funding to CNMI for healthcare upgrades, youth services, public safety, corrections, public schools and colleges, fire and rescue, landfill work, and other.
- Announce next round applications for the Executive Leadership Development Program.
- Held the Mid-Year Compact Meetings with officials from the Federated States of Micronesia officials and Republic of the Marshall Islands to allocated Compact grant funding and review trust fund investments.



## 2018 Top Policy Goals Insular Affairs

Bolster healthcare capacity in the insular areas.

Met with hospital staffs in American Samoa, Guam, and CNMI.

Provided funding in CNMI for:

- The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.: Hospital, Clinics, Guidance Ctr - \$919,916
- The Department of Fire and Emergency Services - \$276,470

Provided funding in American Samoa for:

- Labor, Delivery, and Operating Room Renovation - \$1,454,950 to renovate the existing Labor Delivery room, Nursery and Operating Suite.
- Nursing Patient Care Services and Healthcare Support Staff Workforce Development and Capacity Training - \$163,847 to train, license, and build the healthcare workforce at the LBJ Hospital.

Met with the Veterans Administration to initiate an effort to provide healthcare benefits to US military veterans living in the Freely Associated States.



## 2018 Top Policy Goals Insular Affairs

Address political status of territories.

- The State Department is moving forward on the Secretary's idea of inviting the three FAS Presidents for a White House meeting with the President.
- Addressed the annual Micronesian Island Forum attended by the US Governors of CNMI and Guam, the Presidents of the Marshall Islands, Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia, and Governors of the four FSM states. The US State Department and DOD attended.
- Provided the keynote address at the annual Flag Day event in American Samoa. "We are all Americans."
- Provided \$1 million in grant funding to Close Up Foundation and Junior Statesmen programs to teach democracy and the Constitution.
- Assisting the State Department in organizing a June 8 event in Washington on the future of funding for the FAS after grants end in 2023.



## 2018 Top Policy Goals Insular Affairs

Building National Defense Access and Capacities in the Pacific.

Held recent meetings with:

- Pacific Command in Hawaii and with General Fenton on CNMI.
- The US Coast Guard in Hawaii and in American Samoa.
- Rear Admiral Shoshana Chatfield, Commander of Joint Region Marianas.
- Commander Marine Corps Activity Guam.



## 2018 Top Policy Goals Insular Affairs

Insular and International reorganization.

- Continuing to integrate the program parts of Insular, International and Oceans together through coordinated meetings common cross-cutting equities.
- Working to align budget lines, webpages, and other standard DOI administrative functions under new organization.
- Adding and reassigning staff at the Assistant Secretary level.
- Office has moved to new location.



## 2018 Top Policy Goals International Affairs

Support senior DOI engagement in the Administration's foreign policy priorities.

- Coordinated DOI input into the latest round of U.S. negotiating positions for NAFTA 2.0, including energy, environment and indigenous issues (April).
- Ensured that relevant National Security Council policies and strategies reflect DOI's input, e.g.: on bilateral China relationship and on foreign environmental priorities (April and early May).
- Supported Secretarial and other senior official meetings and engagements with foreign counterparts: United Kingdom, Australia (March/April).





## 2018 Top Policy Goals International Affairs

Coordinate intra-agency and interagency international activities in support of DOI's mission and U.S. foreign policy.

- Engaged relevant DOI bureaus and other agencies to develop an integrated approach to countering trafficking in minerals, wildlife and timber trafficking in support of the National Security Council priority to combatting transnational organized crime (April/May).
- Convened geographic coordination meetings to foster better internal understanding and cooperation among DOI's international programs, on Canada, Mexico, Asia and the Pacific, etc. (April/May).
- Assisted the State Department and U.S. tribes with engaging foreign auction houses and museums to repatriate sacred objects and remains, e.g. France and New Zealand (April/May.)



## 2018 Top Policy Goals International Affairs

Partner with the Departments of State, Defense and USAID to contribute DOI's technical expertise to support U.S. foreign policy.

- The DOI International Technical Assistance Program (ITAP) continued to work on 22 projects in 37 countries at the request of (and with funding from) the State Department and USAID, such as in:
  - **Central America:** supported the State Department in counter-wildlife trafficking regional meeting and exchange of lessons learned/ best practices; engaging with Prosecutor General of Panama and Panama's Chief of Environmental Policy to coordinate upcoming workshops, etc. (April/May)
  - **East Africa:** Partnering with USAID, ITAP supported: a FWS law enforcement training in Uganda on evidence collection and forensic imaging of telephones and computers; a technical exchange between the Kenya Wildlife Service and the FWS Forensic Lab in Ashland; an exchange between the Northern Rangelands Trust and Yellowstone National Park on interoperability; USGS and FWS staff to help develop a mission strategy to combat wildlife trafficking in Kenya as specified in the END Act (early May).





## 2018 Top Policy Goals International Affairs

Modernize the international travel clearance system, passport and visa operations to be more user-friendly and improve record-keeping.

- Coordinated with USGS IT and international leads and other DOI international programs staff to prepare for joint international travel clearance system and records consolidation (meetings in April/early May)



## 2018 Top Policy Goals Oceans, Great Lakes, Coasts

Support Administration priorities through coordination cross-DOI and interagency policy implementation

- Supported development of an Executive Order on the Oceans, Coasts, and Great Lakes.
- Coordinated interagency process to develop ocean resource management-related deliverables for the next 24 months at request of CEQ and OSTP.
- Hosted monthly DOI Senior Ocean Policy Team meetings to coordinate bureau ocean-related activities.
- Participated in USG Planning Team for the Our Ocean Conference.
- Hosted and co-chaired Ocean Resource Management Interagency Policy Committee meeting.
- Hosted and co-chaired Joint Ocean Resource management and Science and Technology Interagency Policy Committee meeting.
- Hosted and co-chaired 39<sup>th</sup> meeting of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force in Washington, DC.



## 2018 Top Policy Goals Oceans, Great Lakes, Coasts

Communicate with partners and stakeholders through newsletters, web, social media, and meetings.

- Published NEWSWAVE newsletter with focus on hurricane response
- Preparing additional NEWSWAVE newsletter and special photo edition for release during National Ocean Month
- Updated Oceans website with recent news clips
- Conducted social media campaigns through Facebook on International Year of the Reef, National Invasive Species Week, and National Wetlands Month
- Partnering with the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation for Capitol Hill Ocean Week; Coordinating DOI presence through booth exhibit and speaker suggestions



## Major Actions in Next 30 – 60 Days

### Insular Affairs

- On June 8, the State Department and DOI will co-host a U.S.-only interagency dialogue to secure the future U.S. presence in Micronesia.
- Following a successful initial meeting in Palau on May 1, 2018 between the United States and Palau representatives, both respective Ambassadors from the United States and Palau are considering a second round of discussions in DC during the week of June 11, 2018.
- On June 13, the Governor of the Virgin Islands will be hosting the final meeting of the USVI Hurricane Recovery and Resilience Task Force. There will be a presentation of the Task Force's Final Report.
- White House Visit for the Freely Associated States: Summer 2018 – The State Department is supportive of a request from the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for a working meeting at the White House for the Presidents of the three freely associated states.



## Major Actions in Next 30 – 60 Days

### International Affairs

- Support potential Secretarial meetings with foreign counterparts: e.g. meeting with Iceland Ambassador (May).
- Coordinate DOI input on U.S. positions in next rounds of North American Free Trade Agreement negotiations with Canada and Mexico (NAFTA 2.0) (May).
- Convene relevant DOI bureaus and other agencies to develop an integrated approach to countering trafficking in minerals, wildlife, and timber in support of the National Security Council priority to combat transnational organized crime (May).
- Develop with USAID potential trips designed to build cooperation on common goals (May).



## Major Actions in Next 30 – 60 Days

### Oceans, Great Lakes, Coasts

- Prepare for DOI presence at Capital Hill Ocean Week (CHOW).
- Finalize interagency deliverables to accompany release of an Executive Order on the oceans.
- Work with WH Communications Office through CEQ and OSTP to coordinate announcements during National Ocean Month (June).
- Publish Federal Register Notice for U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) Meeting in American Samoa.
- Finalize weekly schedule and travel logistics for USCRTF meeting.





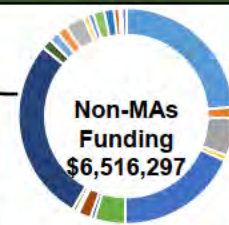
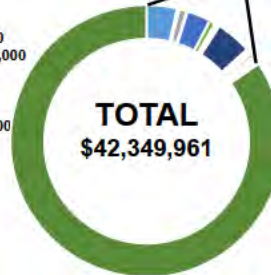
## Hurricane Recovery

- The Department continues to participate in the FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group for Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands (USVI) as the lead federal agency on the Natural and Cultural Resources (NCR) Recovery mission.
- DOI core teams are deployed in Puerto Rico and the USVI to work with Territorial government representatives and local partners on developing recovery priorities and long-term recovery strategies.
- Assessments have been completed at 339 of 366 recreational sites by a DOI team of recreation planners and engineers.
- Assessments have also begun at the more than 400 Department of Natural and Environmental Resource sites and municipal parks.
- Additional National Park Service curators deployed to Puerto Rico to assist assessing damages to collections in museums, libraries, and archives around the Territory.
- In USVI, National Park Service architects and archaeologists continued to assess damages to historic sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Natural & Cultural Resource Sector

FUNDING / EXPENDITURES

- Public Assistance \$1,543,212.78
- Mission Assignment \$35,833,664 (est)
- National Trust for Historic Preservation granted to Para la Naturaleza \$40,000
- USDA - NRCS Caribe, Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP) \$1,800,000
- Lin-Manuel Miranda through The Hispanic Federation Relief Effort \$100,000
- Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative \$105,000
- National Endowment for the Arts \$375,000
- The American Library Association (grants) \$48,000
- USDA - NRCS Caribe (Farm Debris Removal) \$1,200,000
- Initial NOAA Response and Assessment Contract \$300,000
- NOAA Personnel and Travel Expenses \$40,000
- NFWF Funding \$125,000
- Local Support \$25,000
- The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts \$100,000
- Robert Rauschenberg Foundation \$100,000
- CERF+ 190,000
- MusiCares \$47,000
- The Actors Fund \$53,285
- The Joan Mitchell Foundation \$108,000
- Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation \$96,000
- (Jackson) Pollack / (Lee) Krasner Foundation \$50,000
- Ford Foundation \$20,000
- Voices for Puerto Rico \$10,000
- Red de Fundaciones de Puerto Rico \$40,000



4/27/18  
Updated



## Policy, Management and Budget



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### Policy, Management, and Budget

- Promoting reorganization
  - FY 18 reprogramming letter on unified regions ready to go after May meeting with conservation community
  - FY 19 President's Budget
    - Revised draft unified regions map eliciting generally positive reactions
    - Establish BLM HQ beachhead in the West
    - Establish FWS HQ beachhead in the West
    - Move more Reclamation HQ staff West
    - Bring existing bureau regional offices into the same building in Anchorage
- Supporting Susan Combs' analyses
  - Shared services on IT, procurement, HR; consulting support in process
  - Field listening sessions
  - Regional hub cities
  - Prepare for tribal consultation

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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### Policy, Management, and Budget

- Final decisions by Deputy Secretary in process to target hurricane supplemental appropriations and begin reporting
- FY 2018 appropriations windfall bureau operating plans under continuing review by Deputy Secretary' focus on metrics on Secretary's priorities
- FY 2019 Budget hearings with appropriators
- FY 2020 budget formulation guidance to bureaus in May
- 2017 hurricane season After Action Report/recommendations being cleared by bureau directors for Deputy Secretary sign off
- Implement PMB reorganization to reduce the number of DASs from 7 to 5 by end of May

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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### Policy, Management, and Budget

- Help Susan Combs on reorg
  - Implement unified regions
  - Pilot unified regions/Interior Regional Director concept in Alaska, Upper Colorado Basin regions
  - Decide where to establish HQ beachheads for BLM and FWS
  - Manage contract to get better data on potential cost savings from reorg
  - Pursue more aggressive use of shared services to free up cash for mission
- Leverage President's Management Agenda to benefit DOI
  - Grants, HR, IT, acquisition, infrastructure permitting
  - Workforce reshaping, especially USGS
  - Provide Secretary authority to decide on early outs and buyouts
- Revise departmental regulations on NEPA, and potentially on natural resource damages

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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### Policy, Management, and Budget

- Work with Water & Science, NASA, OMB on June 2019 decision on vision for Landsat 10 (could be \$500M+ multi-year cost)
- Explore two invasive species pilots for early detection and rapid response, with Alaska and Hawaii, as part of the FY 20 budget formulation process, focusing on creating incident command structures
- Revise numerous Departmental Manual chapters to lock in Secretarial policies
- Enhance coordination with USDA, DOC, Corps of Engineers, and Western states on invasive species, especially regarding mussels, forest health, sage grouse
- Support Steve Howke on grants review, including procure database

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## Fish and Wildlife and Parks



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### National Park Service

- Deferred maintenance legislative fix
- Use NEPA Catexs
- Finalize harassment plan to add greater accountability
- National mall time, place, and use regulations
- Superintendent rotation plan
- Culture shift
- Achieve tangible public private partnership projects
- Active forest management policies
- Increase recreation access



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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### National Park Service

- **Deferred maintenance legislative fix**
  - Upcoming Senate Subcommittee on National Parks hearing on two NPS infrastructure bills: National Parks Restoration Act and National Parks Legacy Act
- **Finalize anti-harassment plan to add greater accountability**
  - Plan completed as rollout continues with launch of Harassing Conduct Tracking System, additional training
  - New employee relations specialist positions (8 total) in hiring process
- **Culture shift**
  - Director, Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives vacancy announcement closes 05/28/2018
- **National Mall time, place, and use regulations**
  - Draft proposed rule (70+ pages)
  - Major legal issues settled
  - Remaining large tasks: complete evaluation of visual impact study, determine maximum carrying capacity at 4 locations





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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### National Park Service

- Superintendent rotation plan
  - Submitted decision memo for Deputy Secretary
- Increase recreation access: Alaska hunting rule revision
  - Draft proposed rule completed
  - OIRA briefing on 05/07/2018
  - Surnaming planned for 05/15/2018
  - Goal to publish in Federal Register: 05/22/2018



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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### National Park Service

- Use NEPA Catexs
  - NPS-specific memo on streamlining NEPA issued on 02/12/2018.
  - Additional NPS guidance to amplify Deputy Secretary memos on streamlining NEPA will be issued.
- Achieve tangible public private partnership projects
  - National Park Foundation has initiated a study on ways other federal agencies have developed third-party financed infrastructure construction, operation, revitalization, and recapitalization programs over the past 20 years.
- Active forest management policies
  - By 05/18/2018, the NPS will issue its draft plan for active forest management.
  - Plan will include what parks have done and are doing.
  - Metrics will be developed.



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### Fish and Wildlife Service

- Revised rule and EA to allow Alaska 1002 exploration and issue permits
  - Transferred to BLM per legislation
- MBTA changes
- ESA Sections 4, 6, 7, and 10 reforms
- Mitigation policy reforms
- Hunting and fishing chiefs to open 250,000 acres
- Refuge maintenance backlog
- Continue delistings
- King Cove land exchange (completed)
- Bison Range
- State FWS Commissioner Summit (canceled)

E1



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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### Fish and Wildlife Service

- Refuge maintenance backlog
  - In FY2019 President's Budget Request, in process.
- MBTA changes
  - On April 11, new guidance issued to FWS that implements M opinion.
  - Information meeting with partners is being scheduled.
- ESA Sections 4 and 7 reforms
  - Comments from interagency review are being reviewed.
- Continue delistings
  - Tobusch fishhook cactus (proposed downlisting to threatened)
  - Hidden Lake bluecurls (final delisting)
  - American burying beetle (proposed downlisting to threatened)
  - Colorado butterfly plant (proposed delisting)
  - Running buffalo clover (proposed delisting)
- Mitigation policy reforms
  - Direct final revised policies to be issued soon; in review and surname.

E2



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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### Fish and Wildlife Service

- MBTA changes
  - Possible regulation change; SOL discussions
- Hunting and fishing chiefs to open 250,000 acres
  - 186,500 acres announcement in Federal Register
  - Proposal to eliminate 1,400 regs; simplify 700 additional regs (2,100 total regs affected)
- Continue delistings
  - Water howellia (plant)
  - Wild buckwheat gypsum (plant)
  - Hawaiian hawk ('Io) (bird)
  - Northern Continental Divide grizzly bear
  - Grey wolf
- Bison Range
  - FWS released draft alternatives for Comprehensive Conservation Plan for comment.
  - Tribes are being consulted.

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## Indian Affairs



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### Indian Affairs

- Amend land use regulations
- Develop organizational excellence—leadership reform
- Launch Opioid Task Force
- Address BIE infrastructure and national performance
- Educate political appointees on tribal consultation process
- Bison Range
- Reinvigorate self-governance
- Enhancing self-determination and tribal independence



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## Major Actions 30 to 60 Days

### Indian Affairs

#### BIA

- Indian Trust Asset Reform Act Forestry Project consultation review and guidance.
- ILCA lien waiver Secretarial Order Recommendation
- Continued Opioid Enforcement Task Force efforts for interdiction and suppression.
- Final guidance on background checks under Native American Children's Safety Act (by June 3).
- Initiate consultation with tribes on Departmental re-organization vis-à-vis the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Initiate consultation with Alaska tribes regarding Fee-to-Trust and IRA determinations.
- Complete consultation regarding potential revisions to Off-Reservation Fee-to-Trust regulations.

#### BIE

- Department of Ed. / BIE Joint Tribal Listening Session
- Resolve transfer of Title I funds.
- Senate Hearings





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## Major Actions 6 months to a Year

### Indian Affairs

#### BIA

- VA Tribes' Federal Recognition Commemoration and Technical Assistance
- Consider draft guidance on Section 17 Corporations.
- MOU on implementing P.L. 115-93, the Indian Employment, Training and Related Consolidation Act of 2017.
- Update CATEXs applicable to BIA approvals under NEPA.
- Complete tribal consultations regarding Departmental Re-Organization.

#### BIE

- BIE to close out remaining overdue GAO recommendations.
- Conduct first meeting of BIE Negotiated Rulemaking Committee and BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children.



## Congressional and Legislative Affairs



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### Congressional & Legislative Affairs

- Confirmation of all nominees by end of Q1
- Infrastructure backlog bill introduced
- ESA coordination
- Grey wolf and Grizzlies delisting
- Advance administration priorities in energy bills
- Timber categorical exclusions
- Introduction of new policies and procedures to improve Hill outreach and correspondence (e.g. surnaming)
- Extending contracting authority for concessionaires and contracts
- Antiquities Act coordination
- Reauthorization efforts



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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### Congressional & Legislative Affairs

- Confirmation of all nominees by end of Q1
  - Tara Sweeney confirmation hearing today in Senate Indian Affairs
- Infrastructure backlog bill
  - Working with Alexander staff to make changes discussed in TN with Senator
  - Ongoing discussions with Bishop, Ryan, Murkowski, and McConnell to ensure bill can be passed by the end of 115th Congress
  - Comms preparing video to highlight the need for park improvements
  - YouTube video campaign to generate public support
- Timber categorical exclusions
  - Wildfire Outlook - briefing to Congress tomorrow
  - Wildfire hearing in Senate Energy Committee planned for early June
  - This legislative priority is part of ongoing discussion with Congressional leadership.



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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### Congressional & Legislative Affairs

- Confirmation of all nominees by end of Q1
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## Grants





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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### Grants

- Develop a Grants Database that is user friendly and sortable for pertinent information
- Implement a system that identifies those grants that require the most oversight versus those that don't for the approval process; develop an audit system to ensure that accountability is monitored after grants are awarded
- Establish a system with the Communications team to identify PR opportunities
- Change the culture so the Secretary's priorities and expectations are followed so roadblocks to funding do not occur.
- Improve Department-wide grants processing through guidance
- List of changes

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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### Grants

- Shaping FOA's/NOFO's to reflect DOI's agenda and priorities
  - Continue to get briefings from bureaus on individual grant programs.
  - Shore up the selection and reporting processes for competitive awards.
- Start developing a review process for awards on the backend to measure actual versus intended results.
- Begin review of audit procedures within the individual bureaus
- Continue to refine reporting process with the DOI's Coms department and Office of Legislative affairs.

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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### Grants

- Develop a financial assistance database that is user friendly and sortable for pertinent information
  - Pam developed a white paper outlining 3 options to satisfy the requirements.
  - Meeting with GrantSolutions next Wednesday for demo and shore up cost estimates.
- Change the culture so the DOI's agenda and priorities are followed.
  - Made progress with the DC staff, but need to communicate with grant writers and program staff.
- Working with PAM to develop a schedule to update the Regs, Manual, and Policies

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## Recreation



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## 2018 Top Policy Goals

### Recreation

- Bike paths/trails and connectivity
- Establish recreation advisors in all 50 states
- Concessions contracts for large and small operators
- Campgrounds
- Wilderness Areas

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## Major Actions in Next 30 Days

### Recreation

- First meeting of Bureau of Recreation representatives
- Small concessioner meeting
- Made in America board
- 9/11 trail
- AMA
- ROMO Housing
- EO 13658
- RV Campground of the future
- Travel

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## Major Actions in Next 6 Months - 1 Year

### Recreation

- Rebuild/update infrastructure in the parks (ROMO Test Case)
- Change the law which prohibits concessions on BLM lands
- National MTB and Memorial Trail Designations
- Veteran rehabilitation programs
- Potential Wilderness Area Designations
- Access to public lands
- Bike/Hike trail funding

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## Special Projects



## Special Projects

### Yellowstone Bison

- Players: NPS, USDA-APHIS, Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes
- ~800 bison captured in the Stephens Creek facility
  - 1168 removed from population as of 4/3 (last treaty hunt)
  - state and treaty hunt harvest
  - entered in to NPS quarantine
  - 1070 sent to slaughter or killed in treaty hunts
- 2018 Target Population: 3,600 before calving; 4,200 after

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## Special Projects

### Yellowstone Bison

- Quarantine Update
  - Stephens Creek is considered certified, letter forthcoming
  - 98 in NPS quarantine; 3 tested positive: 95 remaining
- Transfer of yearlings to Ft. Peck, CY2018
  - APHIS will review data, generate time schedule
  - 24 hr LE presence has been in place at Stephens Creek

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# Conversation Contents

## Speaking Calendar: Week of 6/4

### Attachments:

/32. Speaking Calendar: Week of 6/4/1.1 Speaking Calendar.xlsx  
/32. Speaking Calendar: Week of 6/4/1.2 Speaking Engagement Form.docx

**"Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue Jun 05 2018 15:54:58 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** undisclosed-recipients;;  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Speaking Calendar: Week of 6/4  
**Attachments:** Speaking Calendar.xlsx Speaking Engagement Form.docx

Team,

Attached, please find the latest version of the speaking calendar, updated for the week of 6/4.

The Speaking Engagement Form is attached on here as well; if an upcoming speaking engagement of yours is not on the calendar, please have an assistant in your hallway fill out the form and send it to Russ Newell and me, with John Bockmier CC'd.

--

Sincerely,

Eli Nachmany  
Speechwriter, Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 706-9285

| Date | Speaker            | Title   | Bureau/Agency                          | Event/Organization  | Topic (if applicable)               |
|------|--------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| 6/4  | Susan Combs        | Senior Advisor, Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife & Parks                            | Fish, Wildlife & Parks                 | Reorganization Listening Sessions                                 | Reorganization                      |
| 6/5  | Susan Combs        | Senior Advisor, Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife & Parks                            | Fish, Wildlife & Parks                 | Reorganization Listening Sessions                                 | Reorganization                      |
| 6/6  | Kate MacGregor     | Deputy Assistant Secretary Senior Advisor, Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife & Parks | Land and Minerals Management           | Women's Energy Resource Council                                   | Interior's energy agenda            |
| 6/6  | Susan Combs        | Fish, Wildlife & Parks  | Fish, Wildlife & Parks                 | Reorganization Listening Sessions                                 | Reorganization                      |
| 6/6  | Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director   | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management      | Offshore Operators Committee General Meeting                      |                                     |
| 6/6  | Todd Wynn          | Director  | Intergovernmental and External Affairs | Council of State Governments Southern Legislative Conference      | Energy Development and Conservation |
| 6/7  | Kate MacGregor     | Deputy Assistant Secretary Senior Advisor, Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife & Parks | Land and Minerals Management           | Washington Oil and Gas Forum                                      | Interior's energy agenda            |
| 6/7  | Susan Combs        | Fish, Wildlife & Parks  | Fish, Wildlife & Parks                 | Reorganization Listening Sessions                                 | Reorganization                      |
| 6/7  | Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director   | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management      | 3rd Annual US Offshore Wind Conference                            |                                     |
| 6/7  | Joe Balash         | Assistant Secretary   | Land and Minerals Management           | Wyoming Mining Association  |                                     |
| 6/11 | Brenda Burman      | Commissioner  | Bureau of Reclamation                  | All-Employee Meeting with Commissioner Burman                     |                                     |
| 6/12 | Brenda Burman      | Commissioner  | Bureau of Reclamation                  | Idaho Water Users Association Water Law & Resource Issues Seminar |                                     |
| 6/14 | Joe Balash         | Assistant Secretary   | Land and Minerals Management           | North Slope Borough 2018 Oil and Gas Forum                        |                                     |
| 6/21 | Scott Cameron      | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  | Policy, Management & Budget            | ONRR Building Rededication with the GSA Administrator             |                                     |
| 7/23 | Brenda Burman      | Commissioner  | Bureau of Reclamation                  | Conference of Western Attorneys General                           |                                     |



| Location             | OCO Remarks? | Press  | Audience   | Point of Contact |
|----------------------|--------------|--------|--|------------------|
| Salt Lake City, UT   |              | Closed | DOI Employees, Other Stakeholders  |                  |
| Sacramento, CA       |              | Closed | DOI Employees, Other Stakeholders  |                  |
| Washington, DC       |              | Closed | Women from Federal, state, local government, and the oil and gas industry              |                  |
| Boulder City, NV     |              | Closed | DOI Employees, Other Stakeholders  |                  |
| Austin, TX           |              | Closed | Oil and gas industry   |                  |
| Washington, DC       |              | Closed | State legislator members of the SLC Energy and Environment Committee and CSG SLC staff |                  |
| Washington, DC       |              | Closed | International (Government and the oil and gas industry)                                |                  |
| Phoenix, AZ          |              | Closed | DOI Employees, Other Stakeholders  |                  |
| Boston, MA           |              | Open   | Industry, academia, government   |                  |
| Jackson, WY          |              | Open   | Mining industry leaders from WY  |                  |
| Boise, ID            |              | Closed | Regional and Snake River Area Office employees   |                  |
| Sun Valley, ID       |              | Closed | Members of the Idaho Water Users Association   |                  |
| Anchorage, AK        |              | ?      |  |                  |
| Denver, CO           |              | Closed | Federal  |                  |
| Santa Ana Pueblo, NM |              | Closed | Western Attorneys General and their staff  |                  |

| Date  | Speaker          | Title                      | Bureau/Agency   | Event/Organization   | Topic (if applicable)   | Location         |
|-------|------------------|----------------------------|---|--|---|------------------|
| 10/16 | Todd Willens     | Asst. Deputy Secretary     | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | American Recreation Coalition luncheon                         | Outdoor recreation  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/16 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Indian Affairs  | National Congress of American Indians                          | Upholding trust   | Milwaukee, WI    |
| 10/17 | Tim Williams     | Deputy Director            | Office of Intergovernment and External Affairs                  | Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum | responsibilities  |                  |
| 10/17 | Casey Hammond    | DAS                        | Land and Minerals Management                                    | Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum | Secretary's Top 10 priorities   | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/17 | Aurelia Skipwith | DAS                        | Fish, Wildlife & Parks  | Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum | Bureau of Land Management issues  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/17 | Kate MacGregor   | Acting Asst. Secretary     | Land and Minerals Management                                    | National Mining Association                                    | Conservation  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/17 | Austin Ewell     | DAS                        | Water and Science   | Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway completion ceremony              | Secretary's priorities for hardrock mining and coal                                   | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/19 | David Bernhardt  | Deputy Secretary           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | National Congress of American Indians                          |   | Folsom, CA       |
| 10/19 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Indian Affairs  | Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council                          | Sovereignty   | Milwaukee, WI    |
| 10/20 | Daniel Jorjani   | Principal Deputy Solicitor | Office of the Solicitor   | CA State Bar Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite          | Upholding trust responsibilities  | Polson, MT       |
| 10/21 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Indian Affairs  | Alaska Federation Natives & Consultation                       | Regulatory reform   | Fish Camp, CA    |
| 10/24 | Scott Angelle    | Director                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exhibition Keynote Luncheon           | Upholding trust responsibilities and Licensed Indian Traders regulations consultation | Anchorage, AK    |
| 10/24 | Todd Willens     | Asst. Deputy Secretary     | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | NM Assn of Conservation Districts                              | Secure and reliable energy production from the Outer Continental Shelf                | Lafayette, LA    |
| 10/26 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | DOI-Self Governance Advisory Quarterly Meeting                 | Public access, forest management, sage grouse   | Taos, NM         |
| 10/27 | Scott Angelle    | Director                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | Louisiana Chemical Association                                 | Reorganization  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/31 | Scott Cameron    | PDAS                       | Policy, Management & Budget                                     | ACT-IAC 2017 Executive Leadership Conference                   | Energy dominance  | New Orleans, LA  |
| 11/1  | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Native American Heritage Month Opening Ceremony                | Management efficiency and effectiveness   | Williamsburg, VA |
|       |                  |                            |   |  |   | Washington, D.C. |

|                           |  |   |   |  |                    |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|--|--------------------|
| 11/1 Greg Sheehan         | Principal Deputy Director                  | US Fish and Wildlife Service                                    | Organization of American States 2017  |  |                    |
| 11/2 Kate MacGregor       | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Land and Minerals Management                                    | Conservation Champion Award   | Award presentation   | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/3 John Tahsuda         | PDAS                                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Women in Energy Infrastructure  |  | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/7 John Tahsuda         | PDAS                                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference - DC  | Land into trust, tribal courts                               | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/8 Scott Angelle        | Director                                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | NACA 2017-Federal Contracting Policy & Advocacy Conference                                    | Economic development for Native communities                  | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/8 John Tahsuda         | PDAS                                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Deepwater Operations Conference   |  | Galveston, TX      |
| 11/8 Steve Wackowski      | Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska | Office of the Secretary   | Tribal/Interior Budget Council  |  | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/9 Marshall Critchfield | Advisor                                    | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks   | Alaska Miners Association Convention  | Federal policy regarding hard rock resources on federal land | Anchorage, AK      |
| 11/9 Vincent DeVito       | Energy Policy Counselor                    | Office of the Secretary   | Easton Waterfowl Festival Premiere Night  | Introducing winner of the duck stamp competition             | Easton, MD         |
| 11/9 Scott Angelle        | Director                                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | Heartland Institute America First Energy Conference   | American Energy Dominance                                    | Houston, TX        |
| 11/14 Andrea Travnicek    | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Water and Science   | International Assn. of Drilling Contractors   |  | Austin, TX         |
| 11/14 Kathy Benedetto     | Senior Advisor                             | Bureau of Land Management                                       | 20th William T. Pecora Memorial Remote Sensing Symposium                                      | Application of Earth Observing Data                          | Sioux Falls, SD    |
| 11/14 David Bernhardt     | Deputy Secretary                           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | Idaho Cattle Association  |  | Sun Valley, ID     |
| 11/16 Kate MacGregor      | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Land and Minerals Management                                    | Western Caucus Luncheon   | Western issues   | Washington, DC     |
| 11/16 John Tahsuda        | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Indian Affairs  | Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club Presentation   |  | Grand Junction, CO |
| 11/17 Vincent DeVito      | Energy Policy Counselor                    | Office of the Secretary   | "Mvskoke Etlwv: The Muscogee People"  | Meet and greet   | Washington, DC     |
| 11/21 Steve Wackowski     | Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska | Office of the Secretary   | TBD: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Gas Infrastructure Exports Initiative                     | U.S. LNG   | Washington, DC     |
| 11/28 Scott Cameron       | PDAS                                       | Policy, Management & Budget                                     | Commonwealth North Board of Directors meeting   | DOI in Alaska  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 11/28 John Tahsuda        | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Indian Affairs  | Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting   | Invasive species management                                  | Las Vegas, NV      |
| 11/29 Alan Mikkelsen      | Deputy Commissioner                        | Bureau of Reclamation   | 2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs Alaska Providers Conference                                     |  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 11/30 John Tahsuda        | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Indian Affairs  | Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference   |  | Hood River, OR     |
|                           |  |   | Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls |  | Ottawa, Canada     |

|                           |                         |  |   |   |                 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|---|-----------------|
| 11/30 Aurelia Skipwith    | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                          | Environmental Law & Policy Conference                                 | Endangered Species Act  | Washington, DC  |
| 11/30 Alan Mikkelsen      | Deputy Commissioner     | Bureau of Reclamation                            | Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition | Panel discussion  | Anaheim, CA     |
| 11/30 Austin Ewell        | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Water and Science                                | Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition | Panel discussion  | Anaheim, CA     |
| 12/4 Kathy Benedetto      | Senior Advisor          | Bureau of Land Management                        | American Exploration and Mining Association                           | Reducing barriers to mineral exploration and development  | Sparks/Reno, NV |
| 12/5 John Tahsuda         | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs                                   | National Indian Gaming Association                                    | Indian trader regulations and proposed land acquisition regulations   | Washington, DC  |
| 12/6 Kate MacGregor       | Acting Asst. Secretary  | Land and Minerals Management                     | Offshore Operators Committee General Mtg                              |   | New Orleans, LA |
| 12/6 Vincent DeVito       | Energy Policy Counselor | Office of the Secretary                          | Platts Energy Conference  |   | New York, NY    |
| 12/6 Casey Hammond        | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Land and Minerals Management                     | American Exploration and Mining Association                           | Sage-grouse, regulatory reform  | Reno, NV        |
| 12/6 Steve Wackowski      | Alaska Advisor          | Office of the Secretary                          | Civil Applications Committee, NCAC Reston                             | Volcanoes and landslide analysis  | Reston, VA      |
| 12/7 Tim Williams         | Deputy Director         | Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs | State Policy Network  |   | Washington, DC  |
| 12/7 Jason Funes          | Special Assistant       | Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs | ALEC: States & Nations Policy Summit                                  | Energy dominance  | Nashville, TN   |
| 12/7 Steve Wackowski      | Alaska Advisor          | Office of the Secretary                          | American Exploration and Mining Association                           | Alaska's mining industry  | Reno, NV        |
| 12/8 Casey Hammond        | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Land and Minerals Management                     | Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable           | Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West | Washington, DC  |
| 12/8 Marshall Critchfield | Advisor                 | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                          | Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable           | Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West | Washington, DC  |
| 12/11 Scott Angelle       | Director                | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement   | Bayou Industrial Group and South Central Industrial Association       | Offshore energy   | Gray, LA        |
| 12/12 Doug Domenech       | Assistant Secretary     | Insular Affairs                                  | Island Government Finance Officers (IGFOA) Conference                 |   | Maui, HI        |



|                      |                                  |  |   |  |                    |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------|
| 12/15 Brenda Burman  | Deputy Commissioner              | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Colorado River Water Users Association Annual Conference  |  | Las Vegas, NV      |
| 1/5 David Bernhardt  | Deputy Secretary                 | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Congressional Sports Foundation   |  | Dallas, TX         |
| 1/6 David Bernhardt  | Deputy Secretary                 | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Dallas Safari Club  |  | Dallas, TX         |
|                      |                                  |  | Heritage Foundation Overcriminalization Working Group   | MBTA M-Opinion   | Washington, DC     |
| 1/10 Gary Lawkowski  | Counselor                        | Office of the Solicitor                        | Archery Trade Association   |  | Indianapolis, IN   |
| 1/11 Rick May        | Senior National Advisor          | Office of the Secretary                        | Consultation Part 151 Regulations   |  | Sacramento, CA     |
| 1/16 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 |   |  |                    |
| 1/17 Brenda Burman   | Commissioner                     | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Mid Pacific Region Water Users Conference   | CA water issues  | Reno, NV           |
| 1/17 Gary Lawkowski  | Counselor                        | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Federalist Society  | Migratory Bird Treaty Act  | Washington, DC     |
| 1/18 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | Consultation Part 151 Regulations   |  | Prior Lake, MN     |
| 1/19 Greg Sheehan    | Principal Deputy Director        | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | Wild Sheep Foundation Convention  |  | Reno, NV           |
|                      |                                  |  | Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Panel   |  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 1/19 Steve Wackowski | Senior Advisor for Alaska        | Office of the Secretary                        | Texas Oil and Gas Assn. Legislative and Regulatory Planning Meeting                                       | Federal regulation of oil and gas  |                    |
| 1/23 Scott Angelle   | Director                         | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement |   |  | New Orleans, LA    |
|                      | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary |  |   |  |                    |
| 1/24 Jason Larrabee  |                                  | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                        | Ecological Restoration Business Association Meet and Greet with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians | Infrastructure   | Washington, DC     |
| 1/25 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | Consultation Part 151 Regulations   |  | Portland, OR       |
| 1/25 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention   |  | Portland, OR       |
| 1/26 Alan Mikkelsen  | Deputy Commissioner              | Bureau of Reclamation                          |   |  | Denver, CO         |
|                      |                                  |  |   | Sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros                   |                    |
| 1/29 Casey Hammond   | Deputy Asst. Secretary           | Land and Minerals Management                   | Society for Range Management  |  | Sparks, NV         |
|                      |                                  |  |   | Secretary's position on tribal relations                                 |                    |
| 1/31 Steve Wackowski | Senior Advisor for Alaska        | Office of the Secretary                        | DOI Alaska Native relations training  |  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 2/1 Vincent DeVito   | Counselor for Energy Policy      | Office of the Secretary                        | 2018 Power and Energy Ski Conference  |  | Deer Valley, UT    |
|                      |                                  |  | Federal Delegation Meeting - House Committee on Natural Resources   |  | Salt Lake City, UT |
| 2/2 James Cason      | Associate Deputy Secretary       | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Close Up Foundation (USET)  | Panel with students  | Washington, DC     |
| 2/5 John Tahsuda     | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)                                    |  |                    |
| 2/6 John Tahsuda     | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 |   |  | Washington, DC     |
|                      |                                  |  |   | Streamline and improve the listing and ruling process of at-risk species |                    |
| 2/6 Greg Sheehan     | Principal Deputy Director        | Fish and Wildlife Service                      | Forest Landowners Association Board of Directors Meeting  |  | Washington, DC     |

|   |   |  |   |  |                                  |
|---|---|--|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 2/8 John Tahsuda                              | Acting Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs   | Western Indian Gaming Conference  | Fee-to-trust under the Trump administration<br>Interior priorities and accomplishments | Valley Center, CA                |
| 2/8 Doug Domenech                             | Assistant Secretary   | Insular and International Affairs                        | Texas Public Policy Foundation<br>Western Caucus Foundation House Staff Policy  |  | Austin, TX                       |
| 2/9 Todd Willens<br>2/12 John Tahsuda         | Assistant Deputy Secretary<br>Acting Asst. Secretary                                    | Office of the Deputy Secretary<br>Indian Affairs         | Planning Retreat<br>State of Indian Nations   |  | Washington, DC<br>Washington, DC |
| 2/13 Dan Smith                                | Acting Director   | National Park Service                                    | FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails  | Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)        | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/13 Brian Steed                              | Deputy Director   | Bureau of Land Management                                | FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails  | Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)        | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/13 Cally Younger<br>2/13 John Tahsuda       | Counselor<br>Acting Asst. Secretary   | Bureau of Land Management<br>Indian Affairs              | FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails<br>National Congress of American Indians<br>23rd Annual National Indian Women's "Supporting Each Other Honoring Lunch" | Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)        | Washington, DC<br>Washington, DC |
| 2/13 John Tahsuda                             | Acting Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs   |   | Protect the Great Lakes and Relationship to DOI<br>Departmental Budget                 | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/14 Scott Cameron                            | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Policy, Management & Budget                              | Great Lakes Environmental Summit  |  | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/17 Aurelia Skipwith<br>2/19 Steve Wackowski | Deputy Asst. Secretary<br>Senior Advisor for Alaska<br>Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks<br>Office of the Secretary       | Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Birthday Celebration<br>Meet Alaska Conference and Tradeshow  |  | Washington, DC<br>Anchorage, AK  |
| 2/20 John Tahsuda                             | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs   | Consultation Part 151 Regulations<br>Native American Child Safety Act (NACSA)   |  | Phoenix, AZ                      |
| 2/21 John Tahsuda                             | Secretary   | Indian Affairs<br>Intergovernmental and External Affairs | Guidelines  |  | Albuquerque, NM                  |
| 2/22 Jason Funes                              | Special Assistant<br>Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary                                   |  | FreedomWorks  |  | Oxon Hill, MD                    |
| 2/22 John Tahsuda                             | Secretary   | Indian Affairs   | Consultation Part 151 Regulations<br>Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and Conference   |  | Miami, FL                        |
| 2/22 Brenda Burman                            | Commissioner  | Bureau of Reclamation                                    |   | Western water issues   | Reno, NV                         |

|                           |  |  |   |  |                      |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|--|----------------------|
| 2/22 Aurelia Skipwith     | Deputy Asst. Secretary                 | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                        | South Dakota Chamber of Commerce  | Tourism through National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges   | Pierre, SD           |
| 2/22 Marshall Critchfield | Advisor                                | Insular and International Affairs              | Coral Reef Task Force   | Implementation of ISAC recommendations   | Washington, DC       |
| 2/28 Scott Cameron        | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | 2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting                                      |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/1 Steve Wackowski       | Advisor for Alaska                     | Office of the Secretary                        | Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference   |  | Anchorage, AK        |
| 3/1 John Tahsuda          | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Indian Affairs                                 | Indian Trust Asset Reform Act   | Implementation of ISAC recommendations<br>Regulators roundtable: Oil and gas industry governance     | Portland, OR         |
| 3/1 Scott Cameron         | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | 2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting                                      |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/5 Scott Angelle         | Director                               | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement | CERAWeek  |  | Houston, TX          |
| 3/5 Tim Petty             | Assistant Secretary                    | Water and Science                              | National Ground Water Association, Irrigation Association & Water Quality Association | What's next for Interior   | Washington, DC       |
| 3/6 Aurelia Skipwith      | Deputy Assistant Secretary             | Fish, Wildlife & Parks                         | American Sheep Industry Association   |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/7 Scott Cameron         | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | CXO Fellows Event (Chief Financial Officers Council)                                  |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/7 Todd Wynn             | Director                               | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | American Coal Council   | Proctor Creek Urban Waters projects in the Atlanta area  | Clearwater Beach, FL |
| 3/9 Brenda Burman         | Commissioner                           | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Western Caucus Foundation   |  | Tempe, AZ            |
| 3/9 Ryan Nichols          | Advisor                                | Water and Science                              | Proctor Creek Celebration of Success  |  | Atlanta, GA          |
| 3/14 Joe Balash           | Assistant Secretary                    | Land and Minerals Management                   | Faegre Baker Daniels Energy & Environment Symposium                                   | Cross Boundary Implications for Pre-Border Prevention and Post-Border Mitigation of Invasive Species | Washington, DC       |
| 3/15 Tim Petty            | Assistant Secretary                    | Water and Science                              | Interstate Council on Water Policy  |  | Arlington, VA        |
| 3/15 Scott Cameron        | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | Western Governors Association   |  | Denver, CO           |
| 3/15 John Tahsuda         | Acting Asst. Secretary                 | Indian Affairs                                 | Working Lands Consultation  | Recreation and fishing   | Mashantucket, CT     |
| 3/18 Brenda Burman        | Commissioner                           | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Part 151 Regulations  |  | Brazil               |
| 3/26 Rick May             | Senior National Adviser for Recreation | Office of the Secretary                        | World Water Forum Brasilia  |  |                      |
|                           |  |  | American Sportfishing Association   |  | Crystal City, VA     |

|                         |                                      |  |  |   |                       |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| 3/28 Joe Balash         | Assistant Secretary                  | Land and Minerals Management                   | Scotia Howard Weil 47th Annual Energy Conference                             |   | New Orleans, LA       |
| 3/28 Scott Cameron      | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary     | Policy, Management & Budget                    | North American Wildlife and Resources Conference                             | Initiatives with invasive species   | Norfolk, VA           |
| 3/28 John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary     | Indian Affairs                                 | Quarterly Self-Governance Consultation, Sharee Freeman                       |   | Washington, DC        |
| 3/29 Greg Sheehan       | Principal Deputy Director            | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference                     |   | Norfolk, VA           |
| 4/3 Walter Cruickshank  | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | Offshore Wind Finance Meeting  |   | New York, NY          |
| 4/4 Walter Cruickshank  | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum                                 |   | Princeton, NJ         |
| 4/4 Vincent DeVito      | Counselor for Energy Policy          | Office of the Secretary                        | Bakken Federal Executives Group  | DOI energy policy<br>Promotion of sport fishing and boating to increase participation | N/A (Conference Call) |
| 4/5 Greg Sheehan        | Principal Deputy Director            | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council                                |   | Washington, DC        |
| 4/5 Tim Williams        | Deputy Director                      | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | Center for Growth and Opportunity  |   | Las Vegas, NV         |
| 4/6 John Tahsuda        | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary     | Indian Affairs                                 | Federal Bar Association's 43rd Annual Indian Law Conference                  | Public land management<br>Indian Child Welfare Act Panel                              | Scottsdale, AZ        |
| 4/9 Brenda Burman       | Commissioner                         | Bureau of Reclamation                          | National Water Resources Association   |   | Washington, DC        |
| 4/9 TBD                 | TBD                                  | TBD  | National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Legislative Summit |   | Washington, DC        |
| 4/10 Jason Funes        | Special Assistant                    | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | "Tuesday Morning Group" - Virginia Institute for Public Policy               | Interior energy portfolio<br>Federal Offshore Oil & Gas Leasing & Development         | Richmond, VA          |
| 4/10 Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation  |   | New Orleans, LA       |
| 4/10 Greg Sheehan       | Principal Deputy Director            | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management  |   | Sheperdstown, WV      |
| 4/12 Alan Mikkelsen     | Senior Advisor                       | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Klamath Water Users Association Annual Meeting                               |   | Klamath Falls, OR     |
| 4/12 John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs                                 | Consultation Part 151 Regulations  |   | Mashantucket, CT      |
| 4/13 Scott Angelle      | Director                             | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement | 2018 National Ocean Industries Association                                   |   | Washington, DC        |
| 4/13 Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | 2018 National Ocean Industries Association                                   |   | Washington, DC        |
| 4/13 Kate MacGregor     | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Land and Minerals Management                   | National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)                                 |   | Washington, DC        |



|   |                                      |   |  |  |                                       |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| 4/16 Ben Cassidy                        | Senior Deputy Director               | Intergovernmental and External Affairs                  | American Council of Snowmobile Associations                      | Motorized access<br>Administration's energy<br>policy strategy | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/16 Vincent DeVito                     | Counselor for Energy Policy          | Office of the Secretary                                 | Northern California Power Agency Conference                      |  | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/17 Doug Domenech<br>David Palumbo and | Assistant Secretary                  | Insular and International Affairs                       | Flag Day   |  | American Samoa                        |
| 4/17 Gray Payne                         | Deputy Commissioner                  | Bureau of Reclamation                                   | National Association of Clean Water Agencies                     | Infrastructure   | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/17 James Cason                        | Associate Deputy Secretary           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                          | Board of Directors   |  | Phoenix, AZ                           |
|   |                                      |   | BLM National Project Support Team Meeting                        |  |                                       |
| 4/18 Austin Ewell                       | Deputy Assistant Secretary           | Water and Science                                       | HayWired Rollout   |  | Berkeley, CA                          |
| 4/18 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | National Indian Gaming Association Annual Membership Meeting     |  | Las Vegas, NV                         |
| 4/19 Tucker Davis                       | Advisor                              | Office of Surface Mining<br>Reclamation and Enforcement | Virginia Coal and Energy Alliance's Annual Arbor Day Celebration |  | Vansant, VA                           |
| 4/24 Susan Combs                        | Acting Assistant Secretary           | Fish, Wildlife and Parks                                | Texas Association of Business                                    | Reorganization   | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/24 Susan Combs                        | Acting Assistant Secretary           | Fish, Wildlife and Parks                                | Texas Farm Bureau  |  | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/25 Doug Domenech                      | Assistant Secretary                  | Insular and International Affairs                       | Flag Day   |  | American Samoa                        |
| 4/25 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | 2018 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference       |  | Albuquerque, NM                       |
| 4/26 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | Coalition of Large Tribes  |  | Albuquerque, NM                       |
| 4/27 Kathleen Benedetto                 | Senior Adviser                       | Bureau of Land Management                               | Good Samaritan Protection to Enhance Abandoned Mine Land Cleanup |  | Golden, CO (Colorado School of Mines) |
|   |                                      |   |  |  |                                       |
| 4/30 Scott Angelle                      | Director                             | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement          | Offshore Technology Conference                                   |  | Houston, TX                           |
| 4/30 Walter Cruickshank                 | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management                       | Offshore Technology Conference                                   |  | Houston, TX                           |
| 4/30 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes                |  | Artesia, NM                           |
| 4/30 Susan Combs                        | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Lakewood, CO                          |
| 5/1 Susan Combs                         | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Albuquerque, NM                       |
| 5/2 Susan Combs                         | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Grand Junction, CO                    |
| 5/3 Susan Combs                         | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Cheyenne, WY                          |

|                        |  |  |  |                                  |                           |
|------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 5/3 Scott Angelle      | Director                                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement | Offshore Technology Conference   |                                  | Houston, TX               |
| 5/3 Rick May           | Senior National Adviser for Recreation     | Office of the Secretary                        | RV Power Breakfast   |                                  | Elkhart, IN               |
| 5/9 Kathleen Benedetto | Advisor                                    | Bureau of Land Management                      | BLM's Nevada Solid Minerals Training Conference  |                                  | Winnemucca, NV            |
| 5/9 David Bernhardt    | Deputy Secretary                           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Assn. of California Water Agencies   |                                  | Sacramento, CA            |
| 5/9 John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary       | Indian Affairs                                 | Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association   |                                  | Washington, DC            |
| 5/11 Cally Younger     | Acting Deputy Solicitor for Land Resources | Office of the Solicitor                        | National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference   |                                  | Louisville, KY            |
| 5/12 Steve Wackowski   | Senior Advisor for Alaska                  | Office of the Secretary                        | Alaska Safari Club Annual Spring Meeting   |                                  | Anchorage, AK             |
| 5/14 Brenda Burman     | Commissioner                               | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Lake Nighthorse Opening  |                                  | Lake Nighthorse, CO       |
| 5/16 Aurelia Skipwith  | Deputy Assistant Secretary                 | Fish, Wildlife and Parks                       | 15th Annual Stewardship Partnership Meeting - Southern Company and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation |                                  | Biloxi, MS                |
| 5/22 Vincent DeVito    | Counselor for Energy Policy                | Office of the Secretary                        | Energy Exposition 2018, Organized by Kit Jennings  |                                  | Loveland, CO              |
| 5/22 Greg Sheehan      | Principal Deputy Director                  | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | National Hunter and Angler Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) Summit                           |                                  | Lincoln, NE               |
| 5/23 John Tahsuda      | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary       | Indian Affairs                                 | Tribal/Interior Budget Council   |                                  | Washington, DC            |
| 5/23 Todd Wynn         | Director                                   | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | Americans For Tax Reform, Coalition Leaders Summit   |                                  | Anchorage, AK             |
| 5/25 Tim Williams      | Deputy Director                            | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | NACO WIR   |                                  | Sun Valley, ID            |
| 5/30 Rick May          | Senior National Adviser for Recreation     | Office of the Secretary                        | Partners Outdoors 2018   | Recreation and outdoors          | Washington, DC            |
| 5/30 Vincent DeVito    | Counselor for Energy Policy                | Office of the Secretary                        | 2018 Energy Forums by Kansas Chamber of Commerce   | The Future of U.S. Energy Policy | Wichita & Garden City, KS |
| 5/31 John Tahsuda      | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary       | Indian Affairs                                 | Consultation Part 151 Regulations  |                                  | Rapid City, SD            |

|                      |                                      |                                |   |  |                  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|------------------|
| 5/31 Joe Balash      | Assistant Secretary                  | Land and Minerals Management   | Alaska Oil and Gas Association (AOGA) Conference                |  | Anchorage, AK    |
| 5/31 David Bernhardt | Deputy Secretary                     | Office of the Deputy Secretary | American Battlefield Trust 2018 Annual Conference               |  | Newport News, VA |
| 6/1 Brenda Burman    | Commissioner                         | Bureau of Reclamation          | Municipal Water District of Orange County                       |  | Anaheim, CA      |
| 6/3 John Tahsuda     | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs                 | Listening Sessions during National Congress of American Indians | Joint session with Department of Education | Kansas City, MO  |

| OCO Remarks?  | Press        | Audience   | Point of Contact                        |
|---------------|--------------|--|---|
| Yes - drafted | ?            |  |   |
|               | Open         | General assembly/tribal leaders  | Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767         |
|               | Closed       |  |   |
|               | Closed       |  |   |
|               | Closed       |  |   |
|               | Closed       | Members of the Nat'l Mining Association  |   |
|               | Open<br>Open | General assembly/tribal leaders  | Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767         |
|               | Open         | MT tribal leaders  | Sonja Twoleggins (406) 252-2550         |
| Yes - drafted | ?            | Environmental lawyers  |   |
|               | Open         | AK tribal leaders  | Alaska Federation Nation (907) 274-3611 |
|               | Open         | Oil and gas industry   |   |
| Yes - drafted | ?            |  |   |
|               | ?            | Tribal   |   |
|               | Closed       | Chemical plant managers from LA<br>Federal and state<br>government/private government<br>contractors |   |
|               | Open         |  |   |
|               | ?            |  |   |



|               |                           |  |                                |
|---------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
|               | Open<br>?                 | Energy industry, state and federal   |                                |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | Open                      |  |                                |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
| Yes           | Open unless<br>objections | Mining industry  |                                |
|               | Open                      | Local residents  |                                |
| Yes           | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | Closed                    |  |                                |
|               | Open<br>?                 | Scientists, engineers, students<br>Idaho ranchers                                    |                                |
| Yes - drafted | Closed                    | Congressional members  |                                |
|               | Open<br>?                 | Oil and gas industry   |                                |
| TBD Yes       | TBD                       | TBD  |                                |
|               | Closed                    | Board of Directors, staff<br>Federal and state government<br>rangeland weeds experts | Slade Franklin, (307) 777-6585 |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | Open                      | OR water users   |                                |
|               | Closed                    | Representatives of Mexico,<br>Canada, and US governments                             |                                |

|          |        |   |  |
|----------|--------|---|--|
| Reviewed | Closed |   |  |
|          | Open   | CA public water agency leadership             |  |
|          | Open   | CA public water agency leadership             |  |
|          | ?      | Mining industry                               | Pat Heywood,<br>pheywood@miningamerica.com |
|          | ?      | Various tribal leaders                        |  |
|          | Closed | Offshore industry and oil and gas             |  |
|          | ?      | Energy industry, federal and state officials. |  |
|          | Open   |   |  |
|          | Closed |   |  |
|          | Closed | Leaders of the State Policy Network           |  |
|          | Closed | State representatives and stakeholders        |  |
|          | Open   | Mining industry                               | Pat Heywood,<br>pheywood@miningamerica.com |
|          |        |   |  |
|          | ?      |   |  |

|        |  |  |  |
|--------|--|--|--|
| ?      |  |  |  |
|        |  |  |  |
|        |  |  |  |
| ?      |  |  |  |
| Open   | Members of the oil and gas community, local business leaders |  |  |
| Closed |  |  |  |

|     |                       |  |
|-----|-----------------------|--|
|     | Open                  | Colorado River water users   |
| Yes | ?                     | CSF/DSC members  |
| Yes | ?                     | DSC members  |
|     | Closed                |  |
| Yes | Open                  | Retailers  |
|     | ?                     | Tribal leaders   |
|     | Open                  | Northern and Central CA water issues   |
|     | ?                     | Law students and Fed Soc members   |
|     | ?                     | Tribal leaders   |
|     | ?                     |  |
|     | Closed                |  |
|     | One trade publication | Agency officials, mitigation bankers, investors, Congressional members/staff |
|     | ?                     | Tribal   |
|     | ?                     | Tribal leaders   |
|     | Open                  |  |
|     | Closed                |  |
|     | Closed                | USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USGS, and BSEE   |
|     | Open (limited)        |  |
|     | Open (local)          | Tribal   |
|     | ?                     | Tribal   |
|     | Closed                | FLA Board of Directors   |

|     |               |   |
|-----|---------------|---|
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
| Yes | ?             |   |
| Yes | Closed<br>?   | House Western Caucus Staff<br>Tribal  |
|     | ?             | Interior and Agriculture employees  |
|     | ?             | Interior and Agriculture employees  |
|     | ?<br>Open     | Interior and Agriculture employees<br>Tribal leaders  |
|     | ?<br><br>Open | Tribal<br>Federal officials, environmental<br>NGOs, local governments,<br>business groups<br>Local community members,<br>elected officials, others interested<br>in the legacy of Frederick<br>Douglass |
|     | Open<br>Open  | Industry  |
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
| Yes | Closed        | FreedomWorks volunteers   |
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
|     | Open          | Western water users   |



|     |        |  |
|-----|--------|--|
| Yes | Closed |  |
|     | ?      | Members of the Coral Reef Task Force   |
|     | Open   | Federal agency staff, governors, associations  |
|     | Open   | Officials from the region  |
|     | ?      | Tribal leaders   |
| Yes | Open   | Federal agency staff, governors, associations  |
|     |        | International group of senior level energy industry executives and government regulators |
|     | Closed |  |
|     | Closed |  |
|     | Closed | CXO Fellows  |
| Yes | ?      | Industry   |
|     | ?      | Western Caucus Foundation members  |
|     | ?      |  |
|     | ?      |  |
|     | Closed | Agency officials   |
| Yes | Open   | Policy experts, managers   |
|     | ?      | Tribal leaders   |
|     | Open   | Forum attendees  |
|     |        | Retailers/manufacturers in the fishing industry  |
|     | ?      |  |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Closed |   |
| Open   | Agencies, Committees, private sector                        |
| ?      | Tribal  |
| Open   | Agencies, Committees, private sector                        |
| Open   | Offshore wind industry                                      |
| Open   | Industry, trade associations                                |
| ?      |   |
| Closed | Council members   |
| Closed | Academics and students                                      |
| ?      | FedBar Organizations, Law                                   |
| Open   | Students  |
|        | NWRA members and water users                                |
| ?      | 2,000 members of the organization                           |
| Closed | Statewide public policy groups and stakeholders             |
| Closed | Lawyers, landmen, regulators                                |
| Open   | Conservation agency officials from U.S., Mexico, and Canada |
| Open   | Irrigated agriculture                                       |
| ?      | Tribal  |
| Closed | Trade association members                                   |
| Closed | Trade association members                                   |
| Closed |   |

|     |        |   |
|-----|--------|---|
|     | Closed | Snowmobile Assn. members  |
| Yes | Closed | Public power officials  |
|     | ?      | ?   |
|     | Closed | NACWA Board of Directors  |
|     | ?      | Team members  |
|     | Open   | General public, state and local partners, other stakeholders  |
|     | ?      | Tribal  |
|     | Open   | 300 sixth grade students, federal and state agencies  |
| Yes | ?      | Business, association, and civic leaders  |
|     | Closed | 30 Texas Farm Bureau leaders  |
|     | ?      |   |
|     | ?      | Tribal  |
|     | ?      | Tribal  |
|     | ?      | Federal agencies, Congressional, state agencies, industry   |
|     |        | Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector |
|     | Open   | Industry, trade associations,   |
|     | Open   | government, academia  |
|     | ?      | Law enforcement officers, tribal members  |
|     |        | Denver-based DOI SES  |
|     | Closed | employees   |
|     | Closed | Stakeholders/AG   |
|     | ?      | CLUB 20   |
|     | Closed | Cheyenne-area DOI employees   |

|     |              |   |
|-----|--------------|---|
| Yes | Open         | Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector |
|     | Open         | RV enthusiasts, outdoor industry  |
|     | Closed       | BLM employees   |
|     | ?            | Elected board members, opinion leaders, general managers, legal counsel   |
|     | ?            | Tribal Leaders of 16 Tribal Nations from South Dakota, North Dakota, and Nebraska.                                    |
|     | Open         | Ecosystem banking and related markets   |
|     | Closed       | Safari Club International Alaska  |
|     | Open         | Chapter members   |
|     |              | General public  |
|     | Closed       |   |
|     | Not expected |   |
|     | Open         |   |
|     | ?            | Federal and Tribal Members  |
|     | Closed       | Conservative think tanks and grassroots group leaders from around the country   |
|     | Closed       | County Commissioners  |
|     | Closed       | Industry  |
|     | ?            | Kansas Chamber of Commerce  |
|     | ?            | Tribal  |



|      |   |
|------|---|
| Open | Representatives of federal, state, local government, and the oil and gas industry |
| Open | American Battlefield Trust board members, stakeholders, and staff                 |
| Open | Water district managers   |
| ?    | Tribal  |

## **SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT FORM**

Please fill out the following form if you have been requested to represent DOI at an event as a speaker or panelist and e-mail the completed form to Eli Nachmany and Russell Newell of the Office of Communications. Please also CC Acting Communications Director John Bockmier. If already drafted and applicable, please attach current talking points or suggested remarks for the event, or send them as soon as possible.

**Principal speaking:**

**Title:**

**Bureau/Office:**

**Date of Event:**

**Location:**

**Event Title and Organizer:**

**Topic:**

**Length and Format of Remarks:**

**Open or Closed Press:**

**Nature of Press and Expected Coverage (e.g. trade press, local reporters, national media, etc.):**

**Audience:**

**Point of Contact for Event:**

# Conversation Contents

## Weekly Report to the Secretary, June 3-9

### Attachments:

/33. Weekly Report to the Secretary, June 3-9/1.1 Weekly Report to the Secretary June 3-9.docx

**"Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Thu May 31 2018 15:14:24 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
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**To:**

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**Subject:**

Weekly Report to the Secretary, June 3-9

**Attachments:**

Weekly Report to the Secretary June 3-9.docx

All,

Attached is the Weekly Report to the Secretary in both Google Doc and Word formats.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Matthew Dermody  
Special Assistant  
Office of the Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
202-513-7778

 [Weekly Report to the Secretary June 3-9.docx](#)

**WEEKLY REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
JUNE 3-9, 2018**

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Chief of Staff Scott Hommel will be in Washington, D.C. June 4-7 and will travel with the Secretary to Massachusetts on June 8 for the Underway Demonstration on the USS Constitution.

Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy Downey Magallanes will be in the office all week.

Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations Mike Argo will be in the office all week.

Senior Advisor to the Secretary/Recreation Rick May will be traveling to Phoenix, AZ on June 4, and then go to Lander, Wyoming.

**Office of Communications**

At this time, no members of the Communications team are slated to travel.

**Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs**

The Department has been invited to the following hearings:

Tues., June 5: Wildland Fire Outlook and Management

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Murkowski)  
Full Committee oversight hearing on The 2018 Wildland Fire Outlook and Wildland Fire Management Programs

10:00 a.m.; Room 366 Dirksen  
Hearing Noticed 5.25.18  
Witness: Jeff Rupert, Director, Office of Wildland Fire

Wed., June 6: Business Meeting to Consider the nomination of Tara Mack Lean Sweeney of Alaska to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (Hoeven)

2:30 p.m.; Room 628 Dirksen

**Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs**

Director Julie Lillie will be in the office all week.



### Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs

Todd Wynn, Director, will be in the office. The Director will be speaking to the Council of State Governments Southern Legislative Conference Energy and Environment Committee on June 6. In addition, there is a potential of a meeting between Governor Martinez (NM) and the Secretary that the Director will join on June 5 or 6.

Ben Cassidy, Senior Deputy Director, will be in the office all week.

Jason Funes, Special Assistant, and Tim Williams, Deputy Director, will be in the office.

Todd Wynn and Tim Williams will both be attending the National Governor Association in Washington D.C.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### Office of Communications

#### **Secretarial-level Announcements/Events/Interviews**

On June 4, Secretary Zinke will attend the National Day of Italy at the Embassy of Italy.

On June 5, Secretary Zinke will have dinner with Ambassador and Mrs. Sugiyama of Japan.

On June 6, Secretary Zinke will participate in the White House Media Row.

On June 8, Secretary Zinke is invited to an Underway Demonstration aboard the USS Constitution in Charlestown, MA.

#### Office of the Executive Secretariat

**Regulatory Reform Task Force**—The Regulatory Reform Task Force is scheduled to meet Friday, June 1. Topics will include the status of progress on several deregulatory rulemaking actions.

#### **DOI Priority Rules—**

- **ESA regulatory reform**—Three proposed rules to revise the Endangered Species Act regulations are undergoing interagency review under Executive Order (E.O.) 12866 at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Two are joint efforts with the Department of Commerce (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), and one is solely by FWS. Publication in the *Federal Register* is anticipated shortly.

- **BSEE Final Rule, Production Safety Systems Revisions**—This draft final rule to amend the regulations regarding oil and natural gas production safety systems (30 CFR part 250, subpart H) is in final surnaming for submission to the OMB for interagency review under E.O. 12866.

· **Interagency Regulatory Reviews**—BOEM and SOL have prepared comments, currently in final surnaming, for submission to OMB regarding revised NOAA technical guidance for assessing the effects of anthropogenic sound on marine mammal hearing.

**Secretarial Memorandum – Enhancing Recreational Shooting Safety on Public Land** – requesting the Assistant Secretaries for Land and Minerals, Fish and Wildlife and Parks, and Water and Science provide a draft report within 90 days recommending uniform shooting range guidance that is consistent across the Bureaus, is informed by best management practices and military standards, and considers the advice of the Hunting and Shooting Sports Conservation Council. Expect Memorandum to be signed May 30.

**Charter Renewal - *Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council***

The Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council's charter expires on June 9, 2018. The charter package is currently in the surname process with the goal of the Secretary's signature Friday, June 8.

**Meeting Notice - *International Wildlife Conservation Council***

The International Wildlife Conservation Council is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, June 19, in Atlanta, GA. The Meeting Notice must be at the Federal Register no later than Wednesday, May 30, 2018.

**FOIA Awareness Reviews** - These rolling litigation requests are likely to circulate for awareness review week of May 28:

**Monuments:**

OS-2017-00207/ Bears Ears, Gold Butte, Browns Canyon, Katahdin Woods, and Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument documents/ *Western Values Project*

**Secretary Orders**

OS-2018-00495, 497, 498, 499/ S.O. 3357, 3358, 3359, 3360 documents/ *Wild Earth Guardians*

**Calendars**

OS-2018-00249/ Zinke, Bernhardt, Cason, Hommel, Argo, Magallenes Calendars/ *American Oversight*

**Jewell Communications**

OS-2017-00434, 440, 441, 567/ Communications regarding multiple litigation cases against Jewell/ *Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance*

**Reassignments**

OS-2017-01174/ SES Reassignments/ *Joel Clement*

**Senator Murkowski**

OS-2017-00938/ Communications with Senator Murkowski/ *Western Values Project*

## **OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt will be in the office all week.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Todd Willens will be in the office all week.

Associate Deputy Secretary Jim Cason will be in the office all week.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

No updates to report.

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

No updates to report.

### **Awareness**

No updates to report.

## **OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Congressional Hearings, and Travel**

No update provided.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

#### **NEW CASES:**

No update provided.

#### **SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:**

No update provided.

#### **OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:**

No update provided.

#### **NON-LITIGATION MATTERS:**

No update provided.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On June 3-8, Susan Combs, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, will conduct listening session on reorganization in Salt Lake City, Sacramento, Las Vegas, and Phoenix.

On June 3-8, Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith and Deputy Assistant Secretary Ryan Hambleton will be in the office.

On June 3-8, NPS Deputy Director Dan Smith, exercising the authority of the Director, will be in the office.

On June 4, FWS Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan will be on annual leave. On June 5-8 he will be in the office.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

On or around June 4, FWS plans to publish in the *Federal Register* the final 2018-19 hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds. FWS annually prescribes frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the number of birds that may be taken and possessed in hunting seasons. These frameworks are necessary to allow state selections of seasons and limits and to allow recreational harvest at levels compatible with population and habitat conditions. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (Updated 05/30/2018)

On or around June 10, FWS will announce updated “eagle priors” and seek comment on several options for applying them. “Priors” are eagle mortality data from wind turbine collisions that used in the collision risk model (CRM) FWS uses to estimate future eagle fatalities at wind energy facilities. In the 2016 final rule revising the eagle incidental take permit regulations, FWS committed to update the golden eagle priors and explore whether sufficient data on eagle collisions exist to develop separate collision modeling for bald eagles. The updated data reveal a slightly lower risk of collision for golden eagles than previously, but a slightly higher risk for bald eagles. No outreach is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (Updated 05/30/2018)

In early June, FWS and NOAA Fisheries plan to propose revisions to the regulations pertaining to interagency cooperation pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 402) and the procedures for listing of species and designation of critical habitat pursuant to section 4 of the Act (50 CFR 424). FWS will also propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for

newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NOAA Fisheries' current practice. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. The rules have been revised to address comments received from the interagency review and have been re-submitted to OMB-OIRA for clearance. (Updated 05/30/2018)

## ONGOING ITEMS

On or around June 8, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to list five Sri Lankan tarantula species as endangered. The species are in decline due to ongoing habitat loss and degradation, and the cumulative effects of these and other threats. This action is not expected to be controversial. Planned outreach will include web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On June 14, the Federal Trustees of the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustee Council will meet to discuss a variety of issues, including monitoring and adaptive management (philosophy and process), responsibilities of federal lead, streamlining NEPA and other environmental compliance and Trustee Council programmatic update. The meeting will be held in the Main Interior Building. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 14, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the Colorado butterfly plant due to recovery. This species is located in Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming. This action is not expected to be opposed. Outreach plans include a national news release and an if-asked FAQ. Key stakeholders include private landowners, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and BLM. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS will announce the approval of nearly \$3.8 million in grants for 28 projects throughout the Americas as part of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant program. Exact date and award amount are not yet determined. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final action designating critical habitat for three plant species on Hawaii island and is correcting the maps for existing designations for an additional four species. FWS intends to exclude lands owned or managed by the Queen Liliuokalani Trust, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and other private landowners under 4(b)(2) of the Act. This action is not controversial. Interested stakeholders include the state of Hawaii and multiple state agencies, the county of Hawaii and various private landowners. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders mentioned above. (Updated 04/18/2018)

In response to a petition to delist the species, in late August FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to reclassify the American burying beetle from endangered to threatened. While the primary threats to the species have been ameliorated, ongoing threats remain. FWS will also propose a rule under section 4(d) of the ESA tailoring prohibitions to those most likely to harm the American burying beetle and its habitats. The American burying beetle currently



occurs in Arkansas, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota and Texas. This finding will likely be opposed by the Center for Biological Diversity and Center for American Burying Beetle Conservation. It is also likely to be opposed by the petitioners, American Stewards of Liberty, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Dr. Steven W. Carothers, as they petitioned us to delist, not downlist the species. Outreach plans include a regional news release and congressional notifications. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed rule to list the hyacinth macaw as threatened. To address concerns raised by the pet trade industry, FWS is including a 4(d) rule that will allow for the import and export of parrots that meet certain criteria, as well as interstate commerce in this species without a permit. Stakeholders include the bird breeding community, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy and World Wildlife Fund. Planned outreach will include a national news release and web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

### National Park Service

#### **NEW ITEMS**

Between now and July 19, Mojave National Preserve will extend the public comment period for the Management Plan and Environmental Assessment for Developed Water Sources in the Preserve. The Plan was first made available on March 20 for public comment. (5/30/2018)

Between June 1 - June 15, the NPS will issue a decision denying certification of the completed rehabilitation of the First National Building in Detroit, Michigan, under the Technical Preservation Services (TPS) office administering the Historic Tax Credit program. The denial is for work outside the scope of what was approved for the project, including a large, enclosed, sidewalk dining canopy addition that the applicant was previously advised would not meet preservation standards and improper repair work to the building lobby's plaster ceiling. The applicant can appeal the decision or undertake remedial work. The building was developed by Bedrock, a real estate development company, for offices for Quicken Loans. Dan Gilbert, CEO of Quicken Loans is a major civic booster for Detroit and has been acquiring and rehabilitating dozens of properties in downtown Detroit over the last decade, some using the tax incentives program. In 2012, two of his first, large, planned tax credit projects were originally denied, but later approved on appeal conditioned upon remedial work. (5/30/2018).

Beginning June 2 and lasting through August 3, Big Cypress National Preserve plans to implement the annual Off-Road Vehicle Closure. This annual closure order is necessary for resource and visitor protection as outlined in the 2000 Final Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. (5/30/2018)

On June 4, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park will close Reeds Bridge Road for construction. Once complete, the second phase will begin on or about September 16, with construction on McFarland Gap Road. The second phase is projected to continue through December 2018. Visitors to the Chickamauga Battlefield will still be able to access the visitor

center and trails and participate in tours. Federal Highways Administration funding was used for the project. The local community will be notified through a press release and other notifications. (5/30/2018)

Between June 11- June 16, the Keeper of the National Register will review the two petitions received requiring substantive review of the Eastmoreland, Oregon Historic District nomination. These two petitions were received on May 18, 2018. In accordance with the provisions of 36 CFR § 60.6(t) [as clarified in 36 CFR 60.12(a)], the Keeper's original review time frame for this nomination has been extended from June 11 to June 16. (5/30/2018)

By June 11, construction crews will actively begin preparing for repairs to the Windy Run Bridge on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Beginning in July, northbound and southbound traffic on the parkway will be shifted to three narrow lanes on one side the bridge. This will reduce lanes on the parkway from four (normally two in each direction) to three (two in one direction, and one in the other alternating with rush hours). This will have impacts to commutes and surrounding roads. The project was announced May 29. (5/30/2018)

On June 11, the Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment (EA) will be available for 30-day public review. The EA evaluates a proposed rehabilitation of the parkway within Virginia from Spout Run to I-495/Capital Beltway. A public meeting will be held on June 19, 2018. A news release will be distributed on June 11. (5/30/2018)

During the week of June 11, Missouri National Recreational River expects to send letters to Congressional and tribal contacts, and neighboring landowners regarding the Goat Island management planning process. The park is developing a plan for recreational use of this property, which was recently determined to be in federal jurisdiction. The States of South Dakota and Nebraska, multiple county officials, and the Bureau of Land Management are partners in the planning process. (5/30/2018)

By June 15, pending DOI approval, the NPS will publish a proposed rule to revise regulations that manage demonstrations and special events in the National Capital Region, including the National Mall and Memorial Parks and Presidents Park. The proposed rule will be open for a 60-day public comment period. Prior to publication of the proposed rule, a communications plan will be developed. (5/30/2018)

By June 15, the Carlsbad Caverns primary passenger elevators, which are undergoing current modernization, will be completed, inspected, and available for visitor use. This is a revised date from the original date of May 25th. The NPS is reaching out to Representative Pearce's staff, as he has been following the project closely. A press release with a new date and the ribbon cutting is being prepared. (5/30/2018)

Around June 15, Grand Teton National Park will release a solicitation for public input and feedback regarding its primary concession contract. Public input will inform prospectus development for the contract as part of a new and enhanced NPS prospectus development process. The concessioner provides lodging, food and beverage services, marina operations, campgrounds, guided horseback rides, and guided river trips at several locations within the park.

The NPS seeks input regarding the addition or removal of services and other opportunities to ensure the concession facilities and operations meet visitor expectations. (5/30/2018)

On June 15-16, Fort Washington Park (Maryland) will host a two-day jazz concert as part of an emerging partnership between the NPS and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. The concert is intended to raise funds for Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument and Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site. The organizers expect 3,500 people to attend. A special use permit is in development and is expected to be issued prior to the event. (5/30/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

On June 5, the NPS Midwest Regional Director expects to sign the Record of Decision (ROD) on the Presence of Wolves Environmental Impact Statement at Isle Royale National Park. The ROD has been forwarded to the Executive Secretary for review following processes outlined in the DOI NEPA Document Clearance Process memorandum, with June 4 as the deadline for additional information requests. (Updated 5/30/2018)

On June 11, construction is scheduled to begin of the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) across the Blue Ridge Parkway. Media attention is on-going for the MVP which will cross both the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Several protests are ongoing on private or other, non-NPS lands. Media attention is not focused on the NPS at this time. The NPS Washington Office has the lead for any media inquiries. (Updated 5/30/2018)

On June 12, pending an updated wage determination from Department of Labor (DOL), Golden Gate National Recreation Area's General Agreement and associated draft leases for the long-term use of Pier 31 ½ as the Alcatraz ferry embarkation site will be considered by the San Francisco Port Commission for approval. This item was before the commission on February 27; however, commissioners continued the vote in response to concerns raised by labor unions about the concession contract DOL wage determination and other labor-related issues. Concurrently the NPS is working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Sausalito (with notification to Congressman Jared Huffman's office (D-2-CA)) summarizing common understandings related to initiating limited ferry passenger service to Fort Baker described in the Alcatraz Island Passenger Ferry Service General Agreement. (Updated 5/30/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

Between June 1-30, construction on Maryland's Purple Line will begin with installing temporary bridge structures along the Baltimore-Washington Parkway during light rail construction. Permitting for the project is in final review. These bridges will span all northbound and southbound lanes on the parkway while existing bridges are extended over the rail line during the next 18 months. (5/16/2018)

Between June 1-15, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (pending Departmental approval of NOA) expects to issue a Record of Decision for the Vista Grande Drainage Basin Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement prepared in cooperation

with the City of Daly City, California. This project would allow Daly City to take project actions at Fort Funston to address storm-related flooding in the Vista Grande Drainage Basin. (04/04/18)

Between June 4-11, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a prospectus for a new concession contract to provide food and beverage services to the public under a concession contract at Stinson Beach. The contract would also authorize equipment rental and convenience item sales. The 10-year contract is set to begin in March 2019. The existing concessioner is a “Preferred Offeror” who is eligible to exercise a right of preference to the award of the new contract. (05/16/2018)

On June 4, Yosemite National Park will close its public scoping period for the Big Oak Flat Visitor Contact Station and Emergency Services Facilities Project. The purpose of this project is to improve the overall visitor experience, improve restroom facilities to reduce wait times, parking facilities, and visitor safety and wayfinding signage. It will also increase accessibility and correct long-standing building maintenance issues. (05/09/2018)

On June 4, the opening ceremony for the Ocean Plastics Lab (OPL) will occur on the National Mall. This exhibit will be on display through June 17 and is an international traveling exhibit by the European Commission, KDM/German Marine Research Consortium (Konsortium Deutsche Meeresforschung), and other partners, which communicates the role of science in solving problems with plastic debris in the ocean. The German Embassy and NOAA are coordinating the event. (05/16/2018)

On June 4, contractor bids are due to rebuild the Sperry Chalet. On May 14, the Intermountain Regional Director signed the FONSI for the Sperry Chalet Next 100 years EA and announced a solicitation to contractors for bidding on the first phase of work set to begin summer 2018. The NPS will rebuild the Sperry Chalet Dormitory Building, which burned in the 2017 Sprague Fire, at its original site within the original stone masonry walls. Critical updates will include meeting current building codes where applicable, and improvements to life safety features such as seismic bracing and fire resistant materials. The visitor experience will be very similar to what it has been for decades by using as much of the remaining historic fabric, and replicating historic finishes where practicable. Construction will be completed in two phases, proposed for the summers of 2018 and 2019. Cost considerations and other unforeseen events or other conditions could affect the construction schedule. The park received 72 comment letters during the EA review period; 58 supported the park’s preferred alternative. One supported rebuilding the chalet in an alternate location, and six supported the No Action alternative. Seven letters contained substantive comments that were responded to in the FONSI. (Updated 05/23/2018)

On June 6, Death Valley National Park will hold a reopening and ribbon-cutting event to celebrate the completion of the Dantes View rehabilitation project. The Fund for People in Parks and Death Valley Natural History Association donated \$273,000 (about half of the construction cost). Dantes View is an extremely popular public viewpoint that provides a panoramic view of most of the park. This project corrects significant safety and accessibility problems. (Updated 05/16/2018)

On June 7, the 30-day public scoping period for an Invasive Vegetation Management Plan/Environmental Assessment at Grand Teton National Park will close. The purpose of the planning effort is to develop a successful strategy to prevent additional establishment and spread of invasive plant species and to restore native plant communities through prevention, control and restoration. (5/9/2018)

On June 8, soldiers from the South Dakota National Guard will arrive in Wind Cave National Park to prepare to upgrade a mile of an existing road. The road leads to the recently acquired Sanson Ranch property. The Guard will be headquartered in the park while working outside the park on this approach road. A groundbreaking ceremony is planned for June 10, with Brigadier General Tom Croymans from the Guard attending. This road building exercise is scheduled to be completed by June 21. (5/23/2018)

By June 8, the National Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Program (NAGPRA) will announce the apportionment of \$1,638,265.00 in grants to fund over approximately 20 consultation and repatriation projects. The grants will be awarded based on the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, enacted as Public Law 115-141, and pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Public Law 101-601, 25 U.S.C. 3001, which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to award grants to assist in implementing provisions of NAGPRA. (5/23/2018)

On June 14 and 15, District Department of Transportation (DDOT) will host a groundbreaking ceremony for the Metropolitan Branch Trail in the Fort Totten area of Rock Creek Park. District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser will attend. More information will follow after the park receives a permit application from DDOT. (5/23/2018)

By June 8, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a competitive business opportunity to establish a waterfront community center at the Fort Baker Historic Boat Shop and Marina as an affordable recreational and gathering place. The purpose of the RFQ is to identify both private- and public-sector entities interested in operating the facility, which is currently operated by the U.S. Air Force as a military recreation facility open to the public. The NPS is seeking a long-term lease that will enable an offeror to make necessary investments in historic rehabilitation of deteriorating facilities, and the provision of public services and programs at the site. The park has kept the USAF informed throughout the lead up to this announcement, and they have express interest in participating in the RFQ process. (Updated 5/23/2018)

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

On or around July 1, pending approval by the Department, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Kauai Island Utility Cooperative application for renewal of their incidental take permit under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA. The proposed



permit renewal application is associated with a short-term habitat conservation plan that addresses incidental take of three listed species caused by the operation and maintenance of the applicant's existing and anticipated new construction electrical utility facilities on Kauai, Hawaii. The applicant is requesting renewal of the permit to authorize incidental take of the federally endangered Hawaiian petrel, the federally endangered Hawaiian band-rumped storm-petrel, and the federally threatened Newell's shearwater. When the NOA publishes, outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, information bulletin and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, and targeted stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/30/2018)

On or around July 31 or later, FWS anticipates the draft supplemental environmental impact statement for expanded public access to Rattlesnake Mountain on Hanford Reach National Monument, in Washington State, will be available for public review and comment. This is part of the required regulatory processes to provide public access to Rattlesnake Mountain, consistent with a mandate in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to provide public access to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain for educational, recreational, historical, scientific, cultural, and other purposes, including motor vehicle and pedestrian and other non-motorized access. FWS established a tribal working group with four local tribes and held public scoping meetings to address cultural concerns and to work through the process of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. FWS is addressing National Environmental Policy Act compliance by drafting a supplement to the 2008 Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Monument. Expanded public access will be controversial with tribes. FWS will continue outreach efforts to the tribes, media and the public. A local news release is planned to alert the public that comment period is open. (Updated 05/30/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On or around June 27, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposed revision of the existing non-essential experimental population (NEP) designation of red wolves in North Carolina under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. FWS anticipates opposition from North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), which has officially requested the termination of this NEP, the North Carolina Farm Bureau, and most private landowners with wolves using their property. Although national and local environmental groups will support the continuation of a NEP in North Carolina, they will likely oppose any alternative short of full protections under the Act and the proposed reduction in the size of the NEP. Interested stakeholders other than NCWRC include Defenders of Wildlife, the Red Wolf Coalition, Red Wolf Species Survival Plan cooperators, and other non-governmental organizations that support red wolf conservation. Some of these stakeholders have challenged the current red wolf program in court, and it is important to our defense of that case that we meet the target *Federal Register* date with this notice, as it will support an argument that the actions being challenged are about to be mooted out by this action. Outreach will include a news release, social media, emails and phone calls. (05/09/2018)

On June 29, FWS will hold the First Day of Sale ceremony for the 2018-2019 Federal and Junior Duck Stamps at Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World in Hanover, Maryland. The event begins at 11 a.m. and is free and open to the public. Both the Federal and Junior Duck Stamp artists will be

available to sign stamps, and the U.S. Postal Service will have a special cancellation for collectors. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 29, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final listing determination for the meltwater lednian stonefly and the western glacier stonefly, located in Montana and Wyoming. Interested stakeholders include WildEarth Guardians, Xerces Society, Center for Biological Diversity and the states of Montana and Wyoming. The State of Wyoming has expressed opposition to the listing. Planned outreach will include a regional news release, web updates, and congressional/stakeholder notifications. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 29, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the running buffalo clover, located in Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Outreach plans include a news release, social media, fact sheet, and FAQs. Stakeholders include members of Congress and recovery partners including state agencies in the range states. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 30, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed reclassification of the southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou (endangered) by defining the entire Southern Mountain Caribou population as a distinct population segment (DPS) and listing it as endangered. In 2012, FWS designated critical habitat for the southern Selkirk Mountains population, which will remain unchanged. Several non-governmental organizations (International Fund for Wildlife, Kettle Range Conservation Group, Selkirk Conservation Alliance, Kootenai Environmental Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity, Idaho Conservation League) will likely view our final determination favorably. The Pacific Legal Foundation (and Bonner County as represented by PLF) is likely to challenge the determination. Idaho may view the listing of the DPS and endangered determination unfavorably. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls. (05/16/2018)

On or around July 2 FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* 90-day findings on petitions to list the Dixie Valley toad and Oregon vesper sparrow, and delist the western distinct population segment (DPS) of the yellow-billed cuckoo. These findings are the first step in a longer process and tend not to get significant media attention; however, for substantial 90-day findings, this action might be the first time stakeholders become aware that FWS is assessing the status of a species. The finding on the petition to delist the western DPS of the yellow-billed cuckoo will receive attention from numerous stakeholders including the petitioners and plaintiffs that have filed a notice of intent to sue FWS for failure to designate critical habitat for the species. All stakeholders will have ample opportunity to provide input into our eventual 12-month findings. A national news bulletin and congressional notifications are planned. (05/16/2018)

National Park Service

## **NEW ITEMS**

Between June 18 - July 2, the Keeper of the National Register will review the National Register nomination received on May 18, 2018, from the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) for the Ch'u'itnu Historic District Traditional Cultural Property. The nomination is controversial—several private property owners and public agencies oppose it. The nomination, as written, was approved by the Alaska Historical Commission by a vote of 6-2, with one abstention. The Alaska SHPO does not fully concur with the recommendation of the Commission. The nomination is currently under review by the Keeper, who must render a decision on it by listing it, returning it for correction, or rejecting it by July 2, 2018. (5/30/2018)

On or about June 18, Rocky Mountain National Park will release for a 30-day public review period the Fall River Entrance Improvements Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA provides a no-action alternative and three action alternatives to address congestion at the entrance and related impacts on visitors and neighboring businesses, staff and visitor safety issues, as well as other operational concerns. The proposed action and preferred alternative is to replace the outdated entrance stations and associated buildings in their current location, and install a new fast-pass lane. (5/30/2018)

Between June 25-29, George Washington Memorial Parkway will release the Arlington County and Vicinity Boathouse Facilities Environmental Assessment (EA) for 30-day public review. The EA evaluates proposed construction and operation of non-motorized boating facilities on lands administered by the George Washington Memorial Parkway along the Potomac River along with a series of access points to the river to accommodate canoes and kayaks. A public meeting will be held during the week of July 9, 2018. A news release will be distributed the week of June 25. (5/30/2018)

Between August 1-31, cremated remains left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial will be interred under an agreement between National Mall and Memorial Parks and Missing in America Project (MIAP), an organization that locates, identifies and inters unclaimed, cremated remains of American veterans left with private, state and federal organizations. Under the five-year renewable agreement, MIAP will take possession of the 70 sets of cremated remains that have been left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial since 1989, as well as any future cremains left at the memorial, and place them in an in-ground vault in a private cemetery in Manassas, Virginia. (5/30/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 18, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park will host King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain for a tour of Mission San Jose. The City of San Antonio Office of International Relations is coordinating the park tour as part of a three-day visit by the royal family to commemorate the Tri-centennial of the founding of San Antonio, Texas, as a Spanish mission in 1718. A public announcement about the visit will be made at a later date. Park employees involved in the planning effort have signed a modified confidentiality agreement (reviewed by our solicitor) with the City of San Antonio to coordinate planning efforts and keep the visit confidential. (*Close Hold*) (05/02/2018)

On June 26, the Acadia National Park Draft Transportation Plan and EIS public comment period will close. The comment period is open concurrently with the published EPA Notice of Availability. Public comment will be received through the PEPC website, standard mail, and during Open House events. Press interest in this public comment period is expected to be very high. The communication plan has been shared with NPS Comms. (05/02/2018)

Until June 30, State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices may apply for the remaining funding from the FY 2018 Annual HPF grants that is noticed on Grants.gov. (Updated 5/9/2018)

By July 15, Olympic National Park's 2017 Natural Resource Condition Assessment (NRCA) will be published as a National Park Service Resource Report. This report is jointly funded by the USGS and the NPS NRCA Program. A joint NPS-USGS news release will be issued announcing the report. (Updated 5/2/2018)

Between July 19-31, the American Indian Movement (AIM) will hold its 27th annual Sundance at Pipestone National Monument. The Sundance is the central sacred ceremony for the Lakota Tribes. On April 2, the NPS received a proposal from AIM to improve the grounds used for the Sundance. The NPS began working through the compliance process for the proposed improvements and has introduced possible alternatives to meet AIM's needs. (Updated 04/11/18).

By July 30, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Scotty's Castle Flood Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment and FONSI. This document analyzes repair work planned for historic structures, the cultural landscape, utilities, parking, and walkways to recover from damage from a flash flood in October 2015. The historic district is scheduled to reopen to the public in 2020. (Updated 5/9/2018)

In August, at Death Valley National Park, reconstruction work is scheduled to start and be completed by May 2019 that will allow reopening of the northeast entrance to the park and restore public access to Scotty's Castle after massive damage from flooding in October 2015. Construction dates will be confirmed after release of the final Bonnie Clare Road Reconstruction Environmental Assessment and FONSI. (Updated 5/9/2018)

## **Awareness**

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## **NEW ITEMS**

National Wildlife Refuge System staff is working with state and local authorities to determine the environmental impact of an estimated 10 million gallons of liquid that was released from a settling pond to aid in the rescue of a worker at a Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, frac sand mine. The water, silt, clay and sand mixture, which may also contain polyacrylamide, was released from a holding pond at the mine on May 21 by emergency responders rescuing a worker

whose bulldozer slid into the pond. At the time of this entry, the spill had made it into the refuge through the main channel of the Trempealeau River. (05/30 /2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

Kilauea volcano continues to erupt on the Big Island (Hawaii Island). All FWS employees remain safe, as do all government facilities at the Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge. FWS staff have been in close contact with state partners, NPS, USGS, and the regional environmental officer for the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance to begin assessing the impacts of the volcanic activity and associated response actions to the trust resources in the area. (Updated 05/30/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (PDAS) John Tahsuda will be traveling to Kansas City, Missouri, June 3-4, and will be in the office for the remainder of the week.

Acting Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Director Darryl LaCounte will be in the office all week.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Director Tony Dearman will be in the office all week.

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management George Bearpaw will be in the office all week.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 3 and 4, PDAS Tahsuda will be hosting three listening sessions at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Mid-Year Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the sessions is in the surname process. The listening sessions will address the DOI Reorganization, potential revisions to fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR Part 151, and law enforcement. There will also be a joint BIE and U.S. Department of Education listening session on set-aside funding for BIE.

The week of June 4, PDAS Tahsuda plans to attend several sessions at the NCAI Mid-Year Conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

On June 6, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold a business meeting on the nomination of Tara Sweeney for Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs.

On June 13, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold an oversight hearing on the GAO High Risk report for BIA and BIA. BIE Director Dearman will serve as a witness. A witness for BIA has yet to be identified.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**



## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 7, BIA's Chief Forester, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management (DFWFM) is scheduled to speak at the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Intertribal Timber Council Symposium hosted by the Quinault Indian Nation in Ocean Shores, Washington.

On June 12-13, the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) will host a meeting and field tour in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The purpose of meeting is to view, understand and build from on the ground success that supports WFLC priorities and the goals of the Cohesive Strategy.

On June 19-21, the Indian Energy Service Center (IESC) has tentatively scheduled the next Fort Berthold Federal Partners Meeting in Lakewood, Colorado. The Three Affiliated Tribes will participate in a listening session as part of the meeting. The discussion topics are issues associated with mineral and energy development located on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation.

### Bureau of Indian Education

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 3, BIE will host a joint listening session with U.S. Department of Education at the NCAI mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri, addressing set-aside funding for BIE. BIE Deputy Bureau Director Bart Stevens, the Chief of Staff Juanita Mendoza, and the Associate Deputy Director for the Division of Performance and Accountability Jeff Hamley will participate represent BIE at the session.

BIE is preparing the notice to establish its BIE Standards, Assessments, and Accountability System Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. The deadline for nominations to the committee was May 17. Comments on the proposed membership were minimal and the suggested nominees will be prepared for White House review and approval.

June 10-15, BIE will host a training for BIE-funded school and Title V staff at Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon

June 17-22, BIE will host a training for BIE-funded school and Title V staff in Bloomington, Minnesota.

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

### Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

June 19 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization at Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, in New Buffalo, Michigan. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

June 21 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization in Billings, Montana. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

June 25 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

June 28 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization at Jackson Rancheria in Jackson, California. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

On July 17, the Office of Self-Governance will host the DOI Self-Governance Advisory Committee and Technical Workgroup Quarterly Meeting. The following day, the Self-Governance Advisory Committee will meet with the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs.

July 23 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization at Morongo in Banning, California. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

August 2 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization in Juneau, Alaska. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

August 7 is the scheduled date for a Tribal listening session on the DOI reorganization in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

August 9 is the scheduled date for a Tribal listening session on the DOI reorganization at Mississippi Choctaw in Philadelphia, Mississippi. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

#### Bureau of Indian Affairs

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

June 30 is the deadline for written comments on whether and how to revise BIA's fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR 151, per the Dear Tribal Leader letter dated February 15, 2018.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

July 1-7, the Native Youth Community Adaptation and Leadership Congress (NYCALC), an interagency effort of more than eight Federal agencies, will support 100 Tribal students in a program to promote conservation on Tribal lands and workforce development.

The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children originally scheduled for May 16-18 in Choctaw, Mississippi, is being rescheduled to a later date to ensure that sufficient advance notice is provided to Board members and the public.

Throughout June and July, BIE will host regional trainings for BIE-funded school staff and Title V staff. In addition to the trainings in Oregon and Minnesota:

- June 24-29 – Cherokee, North Carolina
- July 9-13 – Flandreau, South Dakota
- July 16-20 – Phoenix, Arizona
- July 23-27 – Bismarck, North Dakota

July 14-20, an instructor (Chef Leonard Bailey) and five SIPI Culinary Arts students will attend the 2018 American Culinary Federation (ACF) National Training in New Orleans, LA. Chef Bailey is part of a national competition for ACF Chef Educator of the year.

### **Awareness**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

### **NEW ITEMS**

The Office of Indian Energy & Economic Development is assisting the Metlakatla Indian Community (MIC) to continue assisting the Tribe in optimizing their utility operations. Mr. Stevenson is attempting to modify how the MIC utility operates its diesel generator with the hopes of increasing efficiency by ~40%. This would theoretically reduce the amount of diesel fuel MIC needs to purchase by ~150,000 gallons/year. During a six-hour test on May 8 DEMD was able to achieve a 21% efficiency gain. The gains will be greater in the colder months when the energy load is greater and the diesel can be run at its optimal output

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

Two rules updating Interior addresses in the Code of Federal Regulations are in surname. One updates the address of the Office of Federal Acknowledgment for receipt of acknowledgment petitions. The other updates the address for the BIA Office of Indian Services for the receipt of Indian Child Welfare Act adoption notices.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

A proposed rule to revise regulations addressing rights-of-way on Indian land (25 CFR 169) to exempt Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments from bonding and security requirements is in surname with the Office of the Solicitor.

#### **Bureau of Indian Education**

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

June 4 – July 27, the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) will host a non-residential Summer Bridge Program for commuter students, 21 years of age or older beginning on the SIPI campus in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY INSULAR AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

## Travel

- AS Doug Domenech has no planned travel this week.
- Office of Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula has no planned travel this week.
- Office of International Affairs Acting Directors are Barbara Pitkin and David Downes have no planned travel. (NOTE: International Affairs Director Karen Senhadji is on sick leave).
- Oceans Program Coordinator Liza Johnson has no planned travel.

## **Immediate Announcements and Actions (June 3 – 16, 2018)**

### Insular Affairs

**Domenech and Pula to Attend Pacific Night:** On June 5, The Washington Pacific Committee will host Pacific Night at the New Zealand Embassy. AS Domenech and OIA Director Pula will attend.

**Technical Assistance Program Grants Review:** The week of June 3, AS Domenech and OIA staff will be reviewing grant applications for Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

**Budget Consultative Meetings for 2020 U.S. Financial Assistance under the Compact to Micronesia:** During the week of June 3, OIA grants management teams will conclude budget consultations in all four states of the Federated States of Micronesia (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae) for 2020 budget planning for U.S. financial assistance under the Compact.

**Assessment of School Buildings and Classrooms in the U.S. Territories:** During the week of June 3, OIA staff is concluding assessments and consultations regarding infrastructure needs in schools in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

**Meeting with New Zealand Assistant Secretary:** On June 6, AS Domenech will meet with the New Zealand Assistant Secretary about collaboration in the freely associated states.

**U.S.-Australia-New Zealand Pacific Security Cooperation Dialogue:** From June 6 – 7, AS Domenech will attend U.S.-Australia-New Zealand Pacific Security Cooperation Briefings at the State Department with representatives from Australia, New Zealand, Department of Defense and Pacific Command.

### **U.S. National Security Interests in Micronesia:**

On June 8, the State Department and DOI will co-host a U.S.-only interagency dialogue on the future of U.S. presence in Micronesia to include 1) a session on the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, which builds upon the work of the USG Interagency Working Group on the Freely Associated States and aims to secure U.S. interests beyond 2023; and 2) a session on U.S. territories: Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The

three U.S. Ambassadors to the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands will attend in person.

**U.S. Virgin Islands Close Up Students Visit Interior:** On June 13, forty-seven students from the U.S.VI will visit Interior as part of their week-long introductory visit to Washington, D.C. under the Close-Up program. This is a DOI/OIA funded program.

- Press Release June TBD – Announce Coral Reef and Natural Resources Grant Open
- Press Release June TBD – One Stop We Are Oceania, Hawaii \$250,000
- Press Release June TBD – Historic Preservation Office Grants to Insular Areas
- Press Release June TBD – Guam Technical Assistance Grants
- Press Release June 18, 2018 – Palau Technical Assistance Grant
- Press Release June 22, 2018 – FSM Technical Assistance Grant

### International Affairs

**Canada’s Environmental Assessment Agency:** Senior officials from Canada’s Environmental Assessment Agency have requested a meeting with Vincent DeVito on June 7th in order to share information about changes to Canada’s environmental assessment process.

**Initial Assessment for Energy Governance and Capacity Building Needs in Romania:** DOI-ITAP has been invited to participate in a scoping assessment led by the State Department’s Energy Resources Bureau June 11-15. Representatives from USGS and BSEE will participate. Site visits will focus on oil and gas concessions, data management and environmental risk mitigation. This initial assessment might lead to further energy governance and capacity building in the region later this year. The State Department funds this work.

### Oceans Great Lakes Coastlines

**Capitol Hill Ocean Week and World Ocean Day:** Capitol Hill Ocean Week, or CHOW, is June 5-7 and World Ocean Day is June 8. The Ocean Program Coordinator, through the Senior Ocean Policy Team, is coordinating the Department’s participation in CHOW, which will be held at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. The National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation hosts the event yearly. June has also historically been proclaimed as National Oceans Month. President Trump did this in 2017. Two new issues of the NEWSWAVE newsletter are expected to be released in June for these events. (Conference – Washington, DC; press invited)

- Press Release – June TBD White House Executive Order on June as Oceans Month

**Potential Presidential Executive Order on Oceans Policy:** CLOSE HOLD. It is likely that the President will revoke an Obama EO and replace it with a new EO on Oceans Policy on or near June 5.

### Hurricane Recovery

**FEMA Recovery Support Function Leadership Group:** Curators from the National Park Service deployed to Puerto Rico continued assessing damage to collections in museums, libraries, and archives around the Territory. Multiple recommended Courses of Action have been proposed by the team for the Recovery Report for Puerto Rico. As part of that process, DOI staff, working with FEMA and ElperWood International, analyzed the viability of field sites around the Territory to support environmentally and culturally sustainable forms of tourism that could help jumpstart the local economy. The USVI team continues to work with the Territorial stakeholders to identify key projects to support recovery efforts and identify the federal and other resources to implement them. As an example, the Nature Conservancy was identified as a key partner to support coral reef triage and assessment work.

## **NEW ITEMS**

### Insular Affairs

**Meeting in Palau with President of Palau Tommy Remengesau, Jr.:** On or about June 18, AS Domenech will be on travel in Palau and will have a courtesy meeting with Republic of Palau President Tommy Remengesau, Jr.

**Meeting in Federated States of Micronesia with FSM President Peter M. Christian:** On or about June 21, AS Domenech will be on travel in Pohnpei State, the capital of the Federated States of Micronesia where he will meet with FSM President Peter M. Christian. He will also meet with the leadership of the FSM Congress and the Pohnpei State Governor Marcelo Peterson.

### International Affairs

**Combating Wildlife Trafficking Strategy in the Philippines:** *(NEW)* DOI-ITAP Project Manager, Peter Keller, will travel to Manila June 2-9 to lead Embassy Manila's interagency process for developing its Combating Wildlife Trafficking (CWT) Strategy, as mandated by the END Wildlife Trafficking Act. Mr. Keller will draw on the results of the Embassy's interagency CWT assessment -- in addition to any additional required interviews, meetings, or reviews -- to lead the interagency drafting process for the Embassy's strategy document. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

### Insular Affairs

**US Government in Discussion with Palau to Finalize Adjustments on Compact Review Agreement Funding:** Following a successful initial meeting in Palau on May 1, 2018 between the United States and Palau representatives, the President of Palau has submitted a letter asking for an immediate up front transfer of the \$123.8 million. The U.S. is interested in providing as much of that amount up-front as possible yet also retaining some leverage for accountability.

### International Affairs



**NAFTA 2.0:** INT Policy Division staff continue to coordinate DOI input into interagency review of negotiating positions as requested by USTR, including environmental, water, and indigenous issues relevant for DOI, under the direction of the Deputy Secretary and ASIIA.

**Bilateral Meetings in Conjunction with World Gas Conference:** INT is coordinating with staff from External and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Energy Counselor's office, as well as with the State Department, regarding potential meetings between senior DOI officials and foreign counterparts while they are in Washington DC for the June 25-29 World Gas Conference. INT will collaborate with relevant bureaus and offices to assist with briefing materials and coordination with the State Department as needed.

#### Oceans Great Lakes Coastlines

**American Samoa U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Planning Team Meeting:** On June 14, the Planning Team for the 40<sup>th</sup> U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting will meet to discuss the agenda, theme, logistics, side meetings, workshops, and site visits. The 40<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held in Pago Pago, American Samoa in August.  
(Conference call - American Samoa; no press)

#### Awareness

**Military Construction Spending on Guam Included in NDAA FY2019:** The U.S. House of Representatives has passed H.R. 5515, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 that approves \$377,211,000 in military construction spending on Guam.

**Federal Ocean Policy:** The Administration is planning for the potential signing of an Executive Order for a new federal ocean policy in early June. If released, DOI will have a significant role in the implementation of the new policy. The tentative date for signing the EO is June 5<sup>th</sup>, which will likely be followed by an invitation for a Principals-level meeting.

#### International Affairs

**Vietnamese Minister Meeting with Secretary and MOU Signing:** The Vietnamese Minister of Public Security Tô Lâm has postponed his trip to Washington, DC until a date to be determined, possibly in the summer. The Vietnamese government has expressed interest in the Minister meeting with the Secretary to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen U.S. – Vietnam cooperation to combat wildlife trafficking. The Ministry of Public Security is the government ministry responsible for managing Vietnam's police and public security forces, which play a key role in wildlife law enforcement. INT continues to work with FWS Office of Law Enforcement and the State Department to finalize the MOU with Vietnam.

**Assistance to Tribes Seeking Repatriation from Abroad.** INT Policy Division staff continues to monitor developments and coordinate with other federal offices regarding another Paris auction of American Indian items announced for June 27.

**Interagency US-China Science and Technology Agreement (STA) Discussions.** INT is preparing for expected interagency discussions on the renewal of the U.S. - China STA, which may begin in the next couple of weeks. The discussions will be led by the National Security Council. The interagency will be considering how to move forward with the STA renewal given some U.S. agency concerns about intellectual property rights, and concerns about whether China sees the STA Annex on intellectual property rights as legally binding. USGS has six protocols that fall under the STA umbrella agreement.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

ASLM Joe Balash is in Wyoming.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kate MacGregor will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Casey Hammond will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BSEE Director Scott Angelle will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Bureau of Land Management**

In the next 2 weeks ASLM will approve the following Exempt Federal Register Notices:

#### **Oil and Gas Proposed Class II Reinstatement Notices:**

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW87880, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002132.

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW096788, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002131.

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW180628, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002051.

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW178348, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002050.

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW176517, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002049.

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW174754, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002048.

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW087867, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002112.

Notice of Proposed Reinstatement of Terminated Oil and Gas Lease WYW178259, Wyoming. DCN BLMR002077.

### **Information Collection Renewal Notices:**

Agency Information Collection Activities; Mineral Surveys, Mineral Patent Application, Adverse Claims, Protests, and Contests. DCN BLMR002118.

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Conveyance of Federally-Owned Mineral Interests. DCN BLMR002084.

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Cave Management: Cave Nominations and Confidential Information. DCN BLMR002075.

### **NEW ITEMS**

**May 30 – June 6.** BLM-AK held a kick-off meeting on May 30 with cooperating agencies to discuss preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for ConocoPhillips' proposed Willow Master Development Plan (MDP) within the Bear Tooth Unit of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). The Willow MDP proposes to construct drill sites, access and infield roads, pipelines, a processing plant, and other facilities to support production and transport of petroleum from federal oil and gas leases in the NPR-A while protecting surface resources. The total acreage that could be impacted is not yet known as the applicant has not submitted a formal proposal. The Willow MDP will continue development of ConocoPhillips' leases in the NPR-A and is not expected to be controversial beyond the normal objections lodged by opponents of oil and gas development. BLM meeting attendees include Project Lead Stephanie Rice and the team responsible for preparing the EIS. External invitees include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Alaska Department of Natural Resources; Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; U.S. Coast Guard; Federal Aviation Administration; U.S. Department of Transportation; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; North Slope Borough; Inupiat Community of Arctic Slope; and Native Village of Nuiqsut. On June 6, BLM-AK will host a meeting for ConocoPhillips to present their application and proposed action to cooperating agency staff, and for cooperators to ask detailed questions about the project. (5/25/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-AK. Eastern Interior Field Manager Adam Carr, Fairbanks District Manager Geoff Beyersdorf, and other BLM-AK staff will meet with Bob Sattler of the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) to discuss issues related to a Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) patent on which an Alaska Native youth drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility is now located. TCC is an Alaska Native non-profit corporation charged with advancing Tribal self-determination and enhancing regional Alaska Native unity. The BLM issued the R&PP patent on the outskirts of Fairbanks in the late 1950s to an entity that was dissolved in the early 1990s but was affiliated with TCC and the Indian Health Service. Uncertainties regarding the patent include whether it was properly transferred, and whether it should revert back to the BLM based on how the property has been used; the R&PP patent has strict restrictions on uses of the land by the patent holder. An adjacent property owner has raised concerns related to private property access, recreational access across the R&PP patent, and her ability to develop a marijuana grow operation on her private land. The private landowner has contacted Representative Don Young. TCC has been in contact with DOI Senior Advisor for Alaska Affairs Steve Wackowski regarding the patent status. The intent of the meeting will be to discuss several patent-related issues, including the access issues and possible ways that the rehabilitation facility can remain on the land with an authorization that complies with current law and regulation while addressing the adjacent property owner's concerns. (5/25/18)

**June 5 – 6.** The AZ-NV-UT Regional Wildlife Migration and Movement Analysis Workshop will be held in Mesquite, Nevada. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Nevada Chapter of The Wildlife Society, the Wyoming Migration Initiative, and The Pew Charitable Trusts are co-sponsoring this series of regional workshops for state and federal agency professionals to learn about the latest science and policy developments related to identifying and conserving ungulate movement and migration corridors across the West. The workshops will provide an important forum for agency leaders and partners to explore issues, priorities, and management strategies related to conservation of ungulate migration/movement corridors across larger landscapes, and will include technical training sessions on new modeling software for field biologists and geospatial specialists working with satellite collar data collection and analysis. Two additional workshops are planned for MT-ID and NM-CO-WY later this summer. BLM organizations are encouraged to send appropriate staff in support of DOI mission priorities identified in Secretarial Orders 3362 and 3356. (5/25/18)

**June 6.** BLM-UT. A Decision will be issued to increase the amount of bond required for Canyon Fuel Company, LLC's coal mining operations. The reason for the change in bonding level is Canyon Fuel Company's history of failure to make timely royalty and rental payments. Non-timely payments were documented by the Office of Natural Resources Revenue in July 2016. The BLM met with the company in August 2016 where the company committed to timely payments. In 2017, the company started making late royalty payments to ONNR again. The current bonding level is \$13,625,000 and it is proposed to be increased to \$26,542,000. The increase in bonding is to protect the BLM from insufficient bonding coverage. (5/25/18)

**June 6.** BLM-WY. Wind River/Bighorn Basin District Manager Kim Liebhauser, along with Cody Field Office wildlife biologists, will attend the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee (GYCC) Wildlife Migration Symposium in Jackson, Wyoming. Attendees include representatives from BLM-ID, BLM-MT, and BLM-WY; National Park Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Forest Service; Wyoming Game and Fish Department; Western Landowners Alliance; Teton Raptor Center and National Geographic (keynote address). The GYCC allows federal land managers of the Greater Yellowstone Area to pursue opportunities for voluntary cooperation and coordination at the landscape scale. The symposium is free, open to the public, and not expected to be controversial. Local media is likely to attend. (5/25/18)

**June 12.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office will host an open house meeting in Mancos to discuss travel management on public lands in Archuleta, La Plata, and Montezuma counties. For more than a year, the BLM has worked with its partners and the public to identify a sustainable transportation system, associated trailheads, and parking areas to provide for long-term motorized and non-motorized travel. The intent of the open house is to share route inventories that were compiled in 2016 and 2017. Once an environmental analysis for a travel management plan for the area is drafted, it will be available for public review. (5/25/18)

**June 13.** BLM-ID. The Boise District Owyhee Field Office will return 26 wild horses to the Sands Basin Herd Management Area (HMA) southwest of Homedale. Nearly all of the Sands Basin HMA was burned by the 279,144-acre Soda Fire in 2015. The Appropriate Management Level for the Sands Basin HMA is 33 – 64 horses; there are currently seven horses still on the HMA. (5/25/18)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**May 21 – June 19.** BLM-AK is hosting public scoping meetings on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) during the 60-day public comment period that closes June 19. BLM-AK Acting State Director Karen Mouritsen will attend the May 24 meeting in Arctic Village, and the June 12 meeting in Venetie. BLM-AK Associate State Director Ted Murphy will attend the May 31 meeting in Utqiagvik, and the May 29 and 30 meetings in Fairbanks and Anchorage. The meeting in Kaktovik originally scheduled for May 22 was postponed due to a death in the community and has been tentatively rescheduled for June 12. The last public scoping meeting will take place in Washington, D.C. on June 15. Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Joseph Balash, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Kate MacGregor, and Senior Advisor for Alaska Affairs Steven Wackowski plan to attend. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis which is required before a lease sale can be held. The Coastal Plain is a major unexplored but potentially productive

geologic onshore basin. BLM-AK awarded EMPSi, a third-party contractor, the contract on April 18 to support development of the EIS. (3/16/18)

**Early June.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona Strip Field Office is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The analysis in the RMP amendment will be incorporated into an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead agency to complete the EIS for the Pipeline Project; the BLM is a cooperating agency. The Utah Division of Water Resources is the Project proponent. Although only a small portion (900 acres) of the management area is affected, the BLM must complete the RMP amendment to address inconsistencies between the decisions in the current RMP, the proposed route for the Pipeline, and an existing utility corridor designated. Approximately 1.5 miles of the proposed Pipeline would run through the Kanab Creek ACEC. This information will be incorporated into the FERC's EIS for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 1860

**Early June.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office has been requested to transfer 3,380.69 acres (surface and subsurface) to the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) through a noncompetitive direct sale for the appraised fair market value. The subject parcels are on the western and southern margins of the Gila River Indian Reservation in Maricopa and Pinal Counties in Arizona, south of the Phoenix metro area. These lands are isolated from other BLM-managed lands in the area and were identified as suitable for disposal in the BLM's Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. The GRIC is interested in acquiring these lands because they are adjacent to the reservation and contain significant tribal resources. The GRIC formally submitted the sale request in 2015. The BLM-AZ Land Tenure Steering Committee recommended pursuing this action in May 2015; this recommendation was approved by the Arizona State Director. The BLM has completed an appraisal to determine fair market value of the parcel (\$9,620,000) and is in the process of notifying other potential interested and qualified parties about the sale. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 1804

**Early June.** BLM-CA intends to renew the site license for Calpine's Sonoma Power Plant, located at The Geysers geothermal area in Sonoma County, as the 30-year license for operations has expired. The Ukiah Field Office posted an unsigned Categorical Exclusion for public review on ePlanning on Jan. 24 and it was signed Feb. 1. Once the proponent signs the license, BLM-CA will finalize the process and issue the site license. (3/16/18)

**Early June.** BLM-NM. The Carlsbad Field Office anticipates publishing the Notice of Availability (NOA) for its Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, outlining the BLM's long-term "landscape-level" plans and goals for public lands in Lea, Chaves, and Eddy Counties. The planning area includes approximately 2.1 million acres of

Federal surface land and 3 million acres of BLM-managed mineral estate in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties. The NOA is under review in Washington D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 2012

**June 4.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its plan (pending WO approval) to gather wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area in northwestern Colorado. The Field Office estimates that there are 374 wild horses living outside the HMA. This includes 305 horses in the adjacent, controversial West Douglas Herd Area. BLM has never managed West Douglas for a long-term wild horse population because of habitat and terrain, and has not been able to remove all the wild horses from this area. Many activists want to see BLM maintain a wild horse population in West Douglas. Conversely, ranchers in the area have long argued for the removal of all wild horses in West Douglas. In September 2017, the BLM removed 86 wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas HMA (but not from West Douglas) that were impacting private lands. The Field Office is preparing a Determination of NEPA Adequacy for this year's potential gather, tiered to an environmental analysis completed last year. This gather targets only horses outside the HMA, so all horses gathered would be removed. No fertility treatments will be applied to mares for this gather. The Appropriate Management Level for the HMA is 135-235 wild horses and the current population estimate in the HMA is 544 wild horses. (4/10/18)

**June 4.** BLM-CO. The Little Snake Field Office and Northwest District plan to announce a public scoping period for a proposed summer bait-trap wild horse gather in the Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area (HMA). The proposed gather is under review in Washington, D.C. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 163 and 362 wild horses. The BLM estimates the population in the HMA exceeds 700 horses. The Field Office and district have been working closely with a local partner group—the Sand Wash Advocacy Team—to treat mares with fertility control to slow the population growth. (3/16/18)

**June 4.** BLM-ID. The Bruneau Field Manager will issue two proposed grazing decisions which renew grazing permits, restore riparian areas, protect cultural resources, and incorporate range improvement projects across 187,537 acres of BLM-administered lands. The project lies entirely within a Priority Habitat Management Area, and contains wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was released on August 30, 2017 for public review, and the Field Manager has been meeting with permittees, state and federal agencies, and other interested publics to address comments in the EA prior to issuing decisions. There is no anticipated reduction in AUMs as a result of these decisions. (2/7/18)

**June 4.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will release for public review and comment an Environmental Assessment analyzing a proposal to gather and remove excess wild horses from the Onaqui Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA) and a 10-year plan to maintain appropriate management levels using PZP fertility control and periodic removal of horses. The HMA has a current population of 455 horses with a projected number of 500 with the 2018 foal crop. The



BLM proposes to gather and remove approximately 379 horses to reach a low Appropriate Management Level of 121. The Onaqui Mountain HMA is located in Tooele County, Utah, approximately an hour drive from Salt Lake City. The gather will most likely be controversial with horse advocacy groups, range organizations, and the general public due to the HMA's proximity to Salt Lake City and popularity. (4/20/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-ID. The Shoshone Field Office is working with the Idaho Department of Lands to acquire three easements across state land in the Jerome County Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) leased area. Jerome County has an R&PP lease that covers approximately 6,589 acres of public land referred to as Snake River Canyons Park. The easements, which total approximately 3,588 feet in length, would provide additional opportunities for Jerome County to continue developing their lease and provide permanent public access to an area overlooking the popular Shoshone Falls from the north side of the Snake River Canyon. The project is not controversial, but has been covered in local media and gained the attention of local politicians and congressional staff. The Shoshone Field Office anticipates a decision on whether to acquire the easements the week of June 4 – 8. (5/4/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-NM. The Oklahoma Field Office expects to distribute a news release announcing issuance of a coal lease modification to Georges Colliers, Inc., to expand the active Pollyanna No. 8 coal mine. From March 19 -23, 2018, public notices were posted in three area newspapers, with one more pending, and Dear Reader letters were sent to interested parties; a news release is planned to announce the lease issuance. Colliers submitted the application in April 2015; the Decision Record was signed March 19 and posted to ePlanning on March 20, 2018. The mine is just south of Spiro, Okla., and the lease modification would include 520 acres of additional federal coal reserves at a depth of 1,000 – 1,200 feet, adjacent to the existing mine/lease boundary that would be accessed by underground mining methods using existing infrastructure. The additional acreage contains an estimated 5,616,000 tons of coal and would extend the life of the mine by about 8 years and continue to support 80 existing jobs. The modified lease was signed April 16, 2018, and has been sent to the applicant. Pending return of the lease with the applicant's signature as well as any payments due, the lease will be issued for the 1st day of the following month. (3/16/18)

**June 7 – 10.** BLM-NV. The Carson City District proposes to announce a temporary closure of 450 acres of public lands adjacent to and north of Stead Airport in Washoe County, Nevada, due to activities related to the National Championship Air Races. This action will be taken in the interest of safety for both spectators and participants for qualifying and competition events during the Air Races on June 7 – 10 and September 8 – 16, 2018. This closure is put in place each year in support of this popular event. (2/28/18) DTS 1956

**June 11 – 15.** BLM-MT/DK. A previously planned visit by Acting State Director Jon Raby and Chief of Communications Al Nash to Washington, D.C. to conduct quarterly briefings with

Members of Congress and their staff members from the states of Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota has been postponed. Instead, members of the Montana/Dakotas State Leadership Team will schedule a 90-minute conference call sometime during this week to provide the Congressional delegations an update on BLM Montana/Dakotas decisions, events, and projects underway in support of the Secretary's priorities including Energy Independence, Shared Conservation Stewardship, Safe Borders, Job Creation, and Serving America. (5/18/18)

## ONGOING ITEMS

**Early June.** Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 required Federal land managers to designate “energy corridors” for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines as well as electric transmission and distribution lines on lands in the 11 contiguous western states. As part of the corridor designation process, Federal agencies were required to complete environmental reviews and incorporate the corridors into existing land use plans. In 2009, several non-profit organizations filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court alleging that in designating the corridors agencies did not comply with the Energy Policy Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and related laws. The parties negotiated a settlement agreement that directs the agencies to periodically review the corridors on a regional basis. These reviews are moving forward, and stakeholder workshops are scheduled for Region 2 & 3 as follows: May 31 in Albuquerque, NM; June 4 in Phoenix, AZ; June 6 in Reno, NV; June 11 in Grand Junction, CO; and June 13 in Richfield, UT.

<http://corridoreis.anl.gov> (4/26/18)

**Early June.** BLM-UT. The Utah State Director will transmit a Federal Register notice to WO-240 regarding a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) effort. This notice will correct a previous notice published in 2004 to update the minimum number of individuals from two archaeological sites in southwestern Utah based on updated osteological analysis. Publishing the notice in the Federal Register will be one of the final steps in the NAGPRA process to repatriate the remains of 12 individuals and thousands of associated funerary objects to Hopi Tribe. In accordance with the results of the tribal consultations, all of the human remains and funerary objects will be reburied on BLM-managed lands administered by the Kanab Field Office in Kane County, Utah. (3/20/18)

**June 3.** BLM-WY. The Kemmerer Field Office is working with a new big game hunting outfitter in the final stages of their permit authorization. Big Rack Outfitters is requesting to start a hunting guide service to take clients out for big game animals such as elk, deer, antelope and moose. The permit will be issued for BLM-managed land and the outfitter will be required to follow Special Recreation Permit and special Kemmerer Field Office stipulations. The permit is expected to be authorized for the 2018 hunting season starting in October. (5/11/18)

**June 4.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will initiate a consulting party process under the National Historic Preservation Act to inform the BLM on management of Native American rock

art recently discovered in a proposed gravel pit on West Mountain in Utah County. The Field Office has begun coordinating with the Utah County Commission and the Utah State Historic Preservation Office, and also intends to consult with the Advisory Council on Historic Properties. In 2011, the BLM approved an aggregate rock mining pit for Kilgore Companies on West Mountain. In 2016, the BLM approved an expansion pit, with the standard stipulation that discovery of previously unknown cultural resources would warrant additional BLM decision-making. Kilgore has not yet begun operating the expanded pit, as a permit from the State of Utah is still pending. In December 2017, the Utah Rock Art Research Association (URARA) notified the BLM of newly discovered rock art sites in the expansion area, and a formal survey confirmed URARA's findings. Kilgore has informed the BLM that they do not want to "avoid" the rock art, and would like to pursue "mitigation" under the National Historic Preservation Act's consulting party process. (5/18/18)

**June 4 and 6.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will host public open house meetings on June 4 in Silverthorne and on June 6 in Kremmling to provide information and accept written comments for a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing a proposed land exchange with Galloway, Inc., owners of the Blue Valley Ranch. Under the proposal, the BLM would convey approximately 1,489 acres of public land in Grand County to Blue Valley Ranch in exchange for 1,830 acres of privately held land in Summit and Grand counties. If approved the exchange would allow the BLM to improve public access, facilitate recreation and increase big-game winter range in the area. The Notice of Availability and 45-day public comment period for the Draft EIS was announced May 11. (2/14/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-WY will submit an updated Public Land Order (PLO) for the withdrawal of the Johnny Behind the Rocks (JBR) Recreation Zone near Lander. The proposed PLO would withdraw and close the subject lands to location and entry under the United States Mining Laws, but not from leasing under the mineral or geothermal leasing laws, for a period of 20 years. The JBR Recreation Zone was designated in the 2014 Lander Resource Management Plan to encourage non-motorized recreationists to engage in horseback riding, hiking, trail running, wildlife viewing and mountain biking. The BLM has invested in developing a trails system, parking lot and trail information kiosk with the local Lander Cycling, United States Department Agriculture, Forest Service, Wind River Backcountry Horsemen, Wyoming Conservation Corps, Encana Corporation and the Fremont County Recreation Board. The current trails attract regular usage by local and national recreationists. The temporary segregation created by the proposed application published in the Federal Register on June 10, 2016 (81 FR 37634) will expire on June 9, 2018. The PLO needs to be published by this date. (4/26/18)

**June 6.** BLM-ID. Members of BLM Idaho's Wild Horse and Burro team will host the annual public tour of the privately-owned Bruneau Off-Range Wild Horse Corrals. There will be two tours offered to accommodate up to 40 visitors. Visitors will learn about the 80-acre facility that

contains 39 large holding pens. These pens can safely hold about 100 horses each. Currently, there are 1,070 horses being cared for at the Bruneau facility. (5/18/18)

**June 6.** BLM-MT/DK. Acting State Director Jon Raby will provide opening remarks at the annual meeting of the Montana Association of State Grazing Districts in Lewistown, Montana. The organization has asked for a brief overview of the BLM grazing program, and the anticipated audience is 75-150 people. Local news media may attend. (5/18/18)

**June 6.** BLM-WY. The High Plains District Office and Buffalo Field Office management teams will attend a public meeting in Wright, Wyo. on tribal consultation and access for energy permitting in split estate and fee-fee-fed situations. (“Fee-fee-fed” refers to projects that drill from private surface into private minerals, and then move horizontally to intersect federal minerals.) The meeting is sponsored by the Campbell County Commissioners as part of ongoing efforts by the BLM and Campbell County to increase understanding among landowners. A consulting firm composed of tribal members will present on the tribal perspective relating to cultural sites in Campbell County. Campbell County asked the BLM to attend as a partner and speak to the regulatory aspects of the issue. The meeting is expected to be contentious, but not controversial. The BLM has presented to landowners in the region multiple times in the past, and has visited many of them at their ranches or in the office to discuss this issue, as well as the general role of the BLM in energy permitting. (5/18/18)

**June 7.** BLM-CO will hold its quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The BLM is offering 64 parcels totaling approximately 58,694 acres in Jackson, Moffat, Rio Blanco and Routt counties. Approximately 30,898 acres are on Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, which could generate controversy. Oil and gas leasing and development in Colorado generated an estimated \$2.9 billion in economic output in fiscal year 2016. (4/24/18)

**June 8 – 25.** BLM-ID. The BLM Challis Field Office anticipates posting the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Spar Canyon Right of Way on ePlanning the week of June 8, with an anticipated signed Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact from both BLM and BPA released the week of June 25. In 2014, BPA proposed to improve the access road system for its existing Spar Canyon-Round Valley transmission line located on BLM-managed land in Custer County. BPA and BLM are working on the NEPA document together. BPA’s proposal would involve constructing 4-6 miles of new road, reinforcing road crossings at drainages with rock, and acquiring access rights from BLM for new road use. This decision includes required mitigation related to sage-grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment for approximately 4.4 acres. BPA supports the mitigation plan and is working with the Governor’s Office of Species Conservation to contribute funding for an off-site mitigation project. (5/11/18)

**June 9.** BLM-CO. The 30-day public comment period for the Uncompahgre Field Office’s preliminary environmental assessment for Gunnison Energy’s North Fork Mancos Master

Development Plan near Paonia will close. The proposal includes developing 35 federal oil and gas wells on five well pads, new or upgraded access roads, and new gas and water gathering lines on federal and private lands. The project would produce approximately 700 billion cubic feet of natural gas over 30 years. (4/24/18)

**June 12.** BLM-NV will hold an online oil and gas lease sale for parcels in the Battle Mountain District. Leases on 166 parcels totaling 313,715.31 acres will be auctioned in Eureka, Lander and Nye Counties. The protest period ended May 7. Four protests have been received from the following groups: Basin and Range Watch, Center for Biological Diversity, Wild Earth Guardians, and the Wilderness Society. (5/11/18)

**June 12.** BLM-UT will hold a quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The Color Country District posted the Notice of Competitive Lease Sale on April 26, 2018. The public protest period will end on May 7, 2018. The district proposes to lease four parcels totaling approximately 3,788 acres in Wayne, Sevier and Beaver counties, Utah. The June lease sale also includes eight parcels in the Vernal Field Office that were sold during the December 2017 oil and gas lease sale but for which timely payment was not made by the successful bidder. As outlined under 43 CFR 3120.5-3C, the BLM must consider re-offering the parcels at the next feasible lease sale. The Vernal Field Office completed a Determination of NEPA Adequacy based on the EA prepared for the December 2017 lease sale and the BLM is re-offering the eight parcels. (4/26/18)

**June 13.** BLM-CA. The 30-day public comment period will close on the Bakersfield Field Office's Case Mountain Vegetation and Forest Health Plan environmental assessment (EA) and the unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact for the giant sequoia groves southeast of Three Rivers, in Tulare County. The BLM's proposed action involves a 10-year phased approach starting with road work and roadside thinning; then mechanized extraction, logging and cable yarding within the groves; and ultimately using prescribed controlled burning to improve the vegetation and forest health. The Case Mountain Extensive Recreation Management Area encompasses approximately 18,500 acres of public lands, including the 400-acre Giant Sequoia Complex. This EA includes proposed treatments on private lands to meet the California Environmental Quality Act needs. This proposed action is not controversial, and a decision is anticipated in fall 2018. (5/18/18)

**June 13 – 14.** BLM-WY. The Joint Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources Interim Committee of the Wyoming Legislature will meet at the BLM Pinedale Field Office. The Field Office will provide a regional update, as is traditional for federal agencies with jurisdiction in the meeting area to do. Likely presentation topics will include: the Riley Ridge to Natrona pipeline project, the Normally Pressured Lance natural gas project, other energy projects, rights of way, grazing permits and other watershed issues. The media and public are likely to attend. No controversy is expected. (5/18/18)

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

## NEW ITEMS

BOEM is developing a Draft Environmental Assessment for sand management activities in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, including geotechnical and geophysical surveys for resource identification, research studies, and monitoring borrow areas. BOEM expects to post the Draft EA to its website **in June**. (5/25/18)

## UPDATED ITEMS

**In early June** (as soon as possible), BOEM is targeting to publish a notice in the Federal Register, which will reopen the comment period of the Atlantic (Offshore Wind) Leasing Path Forward Request for Feedback (RFF) until July 5. Requests for the extension were received from two Fishery Management Councils. The notice is currently with the Department for surnaming. (5/4/18)

**In early June** (as soon as possible), BOEM is targeting to publish a notice in the Federal Register, which will reopen the comment period of the Call for Information and Nominations (Call) in the New York (NY) Bight (regarding offshore wind) until July 25. Requests for the extension were received from New Jersey Governor Murphy, the New Jersey congressional delegation, and the National Marine Fisheries Service, which will use the time to provide new data and analyses on commercial fisheries. A Note to Stakeholders announcing the reopening was released on May 22. (5/18/18)

## ONGOING ITEMS

**In June 2018**, BOEM and BSEE expect to publish a Notice of Availability for a joint draft Programmatic EA for routine and ongoing oil and gas activities occurring in the Southern California Planning Area. BSEE has commenced the NOA surnaming process including a 30-day public comment period for the draft EA. The Draft Programmatic EA is expected to be published later this spring and the Final Programmatic EA should be complete by the end of FY 2018. (4/6/18)

**In June 2018**, BOEM expects to publish a Request for Competitive Interest for an area proposed to be used for a right-of-way (ROW) project called Atlantic Link. Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc. filed an application on May 31, 2017 (revised August 22, and September 26), for a ROW grant in support of a proposed project connecting onshore wind and hydro power in Canada to the Massachusetts market via a 350 mile HvDC submarine cable traversing the OCS. The notice is in surnaming with ASLM.

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

## ONGOING ITEMS

**The Arctic Rule:** We assigned a task to the Alaska office to compare the risk of Arctic drilling to the recommendations to mitigate these risks in the national Petroleum council report. This work product was delivered under separate cover to ASLM on **April 27.** 1

**SafeOCS Letter-** BSEE sent a follow up letter to operators encouraging their participation in this program and we have scheduled a meeting in Sterling VA on June 6 at 2pm to discuss the current contractual relationship we have with the Bureau of Transportation and Statistics. Current SafeOCS enrollment represents 29% of drilling activity based on the number of wells spudded and 59% of the oil production during the 2017 calendar year.

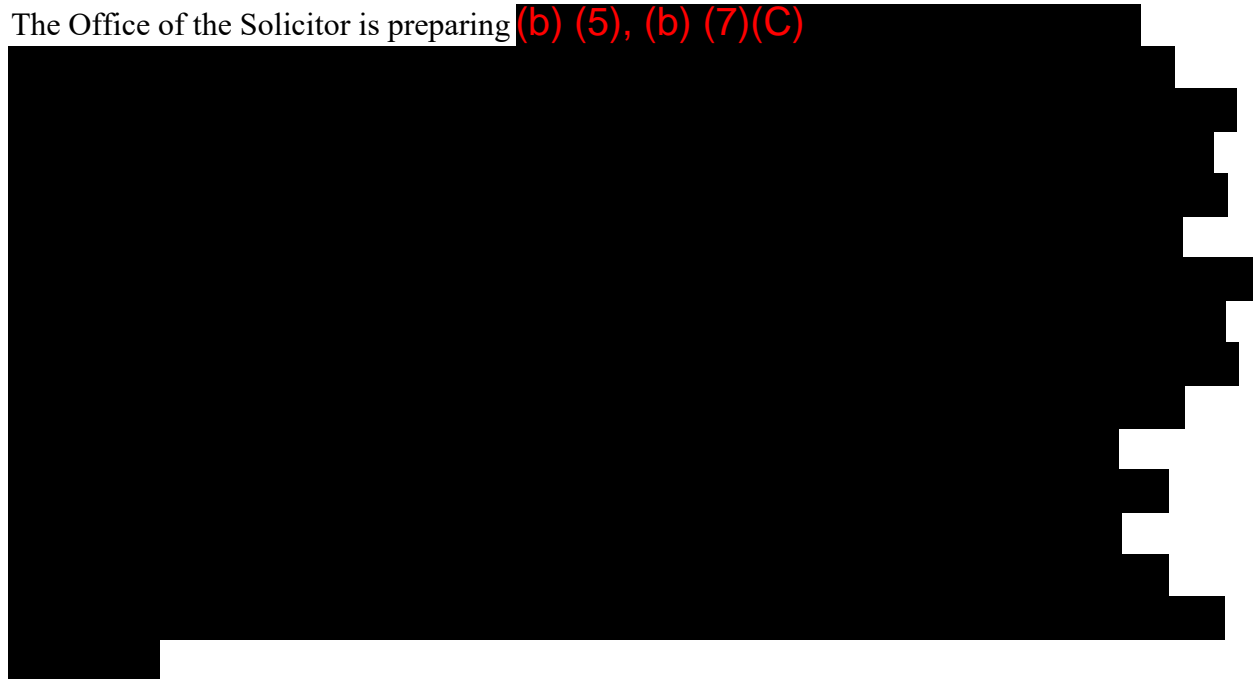
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

## NEW ITEMS

None to report.

## UPDATED ITEMS

The Office of the Solicitor is preparing (b) (5), (b) (7)(C)



## ONGOING ITEMS



**Evans-McCurtain Mine** is a proposed new coal mine operation located in the state of Oklahoma of approximately 1,300 acres. BLM is holding a cooperating agency NEPA workshop the **week of June 11, 2018**, to begin work on development of the leasing NEPA document. Similar to Pollyanna #8 (see above), this NEPA document will analyze both leasing and mining plan decision document effects. This collaboration will reduce time frames after the lease is issued and the mining plan decision document can begin. The remaining reserves on the proposed lease are recoverable only by underground methods. Coal thickness will dictate the use of continuous miner units or, possibly, a plow longwall. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (5/16/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **Bureau of Land Management**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

**June 15.** BLM-AK will conduct the final public scoping meeting in Washington, D.C. for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Joseph Balash, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Kate MacGregor, and Senior Advisor for Alaska Affairs Steven Wackowski plan to attend. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis which is required before a lease sale can be held. The Coastal Plain is a major unexplored but potentially productive geologic onshore basin. BLM-AK awarded EMPSi, a third-party contractor, the contract on April 18 to support development of the EIS. (5/25/18)

**June 15.** BLM-NM. The BLM Las Cruces District Office plans to publish the Final EIS for the Copper Flat Copper Mining Project. The New Mexico Copper Corporation submitted a proposed mining plan of operations (MPO) that proposed reestablishment of the Copper Flat Copper Mine, a poly-metallic mine and processing facility, located near Hillsboro, New Mexico. The mine would produce copper, gold, silver, and molybdenum. The MPO is based on the plan of development the Quintana Mineral Corporation used in its 1982 mining operation of Copper Flat. The proposed MPO includes upgrades and modifications based on current engineering designs and regulations and were intentionally developed to re-use the existing foundations, production wells, and water pipeline that were employed by the Quintana operation. (5/25/18)

**June 15.** BLM-UT. The West Desert District will conduct a field tour of the Sheeprocks area with the Utah County Commission to discuss an appropriate and viable travel network. The intent of the trip is to understand the county's interest in modifying/maintaining the travel

network. The Sheeprocks area is a popular off-highway vehicle destination less than an hour from Utah's Wasatch Front that has tripped a hard trigger in BLM-UT's Greater Sage-grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment. To date, the BLM has completed a comprehensive inventory of all routes in the area (over 4,000 miles). BLM staff have met previously with the Tooele County and Juab County Commission on this topic. Formal travel management planning (e.g., route evaluation, NEPA, etc.) has not been initiated. (5/25/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT. Hill U.S. Air Force Base (AFB), south of Ogden, Utah, is requesting that the BLM Cadastral Survey program perform a Federal Authority Survey of the base boundaries. A draft Memorandum of Agreement and Statement of Work are in progress with funding, contracts and project start date soon to follow. Hill AFB comprises over 6,000 acres and has approximately 15 miles of boundaries in Weber and Davis Counties, now surrounded by the towns of Washington Terrace, Riverdale, Roy, Sunset, Clearfield, Layton, and South Weber. Hill AFB has never had a comprehensive boundary survey and the last survey was over 50 years ago. Hill is also aware of some encroachments with local adjoiningers that need to be resolved. The survey project will take approximately two years to complete. (5/25/18)

**July 1 – 7.** The annual Native Youth Community Adaptation and Leadership Congress will be held at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. The BLM is one of many Federal partners (NPS, USFS, FWS, BIA, NASA and others) hosting this week-long student conference for approximately 100 Native American, Alaskan Native, and Pacific Islander high school students interested in environmental issues, natural resource conservation, community leadership and public service. The Division of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships and the Office of Recruitment and Retention are sponsoring the attendance of five Junior Faculty members; college students from tribal communities in Arizona and Oregon, who will serve as mentors during the Congress. BLM-AZ Youth and Education Lead Brooke Wheeler will also attend, along with other WO staff. (5/25/18)

**July 15.** BLM-MT/DK. The Dillon Field Office has released the Red Rock/Lima Watershed Environmental Assessment (EA) for public review/comment. The EA examines up to four management alternatives for resource management on public lands in the watershed. After reviewing the EA and considering public comment, the Dillon Field Manager will select one or a combination of alternatives for implementation. The Red Rock/Lima Watershed is in Beaverhead County, south of Dillon along I-15 to the Continental Divide. The watershed covers approximately 69,000 acres of BLM-administered land in 28 grazing allotments. There are approximately 400 acres within the watershed that are un-allotted. The comment period for this EA ends July 15. (5/25/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Grand Junction Field Office and McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (NCA) plan to announce a 30-day public scoping period on proposed changes to camping in the Rabbit Valley area in the NCA and the Field Office's 18 Road recreation area.

The proposal includes expanding some Rabbit Valley campgrounds and adding fees to fund campground construction. It also includes establishing a new fee-based campground to the 18 Road recreation area. The Southwest Resource Advisory Council will be consulted on the proposal. (5/25/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-MT/DK. The Dillon Field Office plans to analyze the resource conditions on public lands within the Rochester and East Bench Watersheds. The Rochester Watershed includes 21 grazing allotments and approximately 32,757 acres of BLM-administered public land. The East Bench Watershed includes 17 grazing allotments and approximately 32,904 acres of BLM-administered public land. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents will be prepared next winter to analyze alternatives for revised management where resource concerns are found within the watersheds. The assessments, determinations, and any necessary NEPA documents will be completed by resource specialists from the Dillon Field Office in coordination with permittees/lessees, other agencies and the interested public. (5/25/18)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**Mid-June.** BLM-ID. The Four Rivers Field Office is working toward issuing five Final Grazing Decisions for eight allotments in the Bennett Mountain North area. The permittees include Tree Top Ranches, LP; Desert View Ranch, LLC; Iron Horse Ranch, LLC; Idaho State Department of Agriculture; L. G. Davison and Sons, Inc.; and Faulkner Land and Livestock. Four Rivers Field Manager Brent Ralston will sign the decisions. There is potential for controversy, as there were protests on the proposed decisions, primarily based on a reduction in AUMs identified. The Final Decisions will reflect the previous permitted use, with the caveat that several allotments that have used significantly lower-than-permitted AUM levels for the last 10+ years will contain a condition limiting annual use to a lower AUM level. However, during higher-than-normal precipitation years (i.e., more vegetation growth), allowed use could reflect total permitted levels with prior Field Manager approval. (5/11/18)

**June 20.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates publishing a draft Environmental Assessment for public comment for the Keystone Exploratory Drilling Project, located on existing un-patented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project is within California Desert National Conservation Lands and the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The National Park Service is a cooperating agency on the joint document because of water rights to a spring and an existing water pipeline that crosses the Death Valley National Park. All drilling will occur outside the park and will be supported by existing roads and pads, with several of the drill sites being in existing road surfaces. Less than an acre of new disturbance is anticipated. This project has the potential to draw negative attention from environmental organizations. (4/20/18)

**June 20.** BLM-WY. The Buffalo Field Office released the I-90 Corridor Travel Management Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on May 20, initiating a public scoping period that will end on June 20. Two open-house public meetings will be held during this period, during which BLM specialists will be available to answer questions. The meetings will be held in Gillette at the Campbell County Public Library on June 5, and in Buffalo at the BLM field office on June 6. The planning area is located between the cities of Buffalo and Gillette along Interstate 90 and contains 108,437 acres of BLM-administered land. The majority of the area is in Johnson County, with the southeastern portion in Campbell County. The I-90 corridor has a high density of oil and gas wells and associated infrastructure at or near the end of production. As the wells reach the end of their life cycle, the well pads, roads, and other infrastructure will be reclaimed. This area is also popular for big game hunters accessing BLM-managed lands. The meetings are not anticipated to be controversial. (3/1/18)

**In June.** A report to Congress on efforts to conserve Greater Sage-Grouse, restore sagebrush habitat, and implement a native seed strategy was due July 4, 2017, per direction from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017. The report has been prepared in final draft, but submission to ASLM has been delayed pending determination of the degree to which grants and agreements will be utilized going forward to achieve the purposes of the native seed strategy. (4/4/18) DTS 11379

**In June.** BLM-CO. The Grand Junction Field Office will release the oil and gas leasing environmental assessment for South Shale Ridge, which includes 16 parcels totaling approximately 23,157 acres north of Grand Junction in Mesa County for a 30-day public review. Oil and gas leasing in the area was successfully challenged in 2005 with leasing remanded until the Grand Junction Resource Management Plan (RMP) was updated to address a 1997 Wilderness inventory. The updated Grand Junction RMP was finalized in 2015. (5/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its proposal to use bait and/or water trapping as the preferred method for future removal of wild horses from the Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area. The proposal includes continuing to treat mares with fertility control to slow population growth. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 35 and 65 animals. The BLM estimates the Spring Creek Basin herd is at the high AML for the HMA. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-ES proposes transfer by Quiet Title Deed of a former railroad right-of-way (ROW) to the Village of Forsyth, Macon County, Illinois. The transfer was requested by the Village of Forsyth for use as a recreational trail, under authority of the National Trails System Act. The ROW is 200 feet wide and totals approximately 18 acres. This action has been reviewed by the Pittsburgh Field Solicitor's Office and the Washington, D.C. Solicitor's Office. The transfer is supported by Illinois Congressman Rodney Davis (R-13th). (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-OR/WA. The Upper Willamette Field Office, Northwest Oregon District, is proposing timber harvest using regeneration harvest and commercial thinning across approximately 1,160 acres within the Harvest Land Base—Moderate Intensity Timber Area land use allocation. The proposed project is located east and south of Cottage Grove, Oregon. This project is being analyzed in the Row River Timber Management Environmental Assessment (EA), anticipated to be released for public review in June 2018. This EA analyzes harvesting approximately 50 MMBF (thousand board feet) of timber expected to be sold between FY 2018 and FY 2023. This project is designed to conform to the Northwestern and Coastal Oregon 2016 Record of Decision / Resource Management Plan. The BLM expects that timber sale decisions analyzed in this EA will be protested and appealed. (4/4/18)

**Late June.** BLM-UT will publish the Notice of Establishment and Call for Nominations for the Bears Ears National Monument Advisory Committee. The committee will consist of 15 members representing diverse local community interests and appointed to staggered three-year terms. Members will include representatives from state, local, and tribal governments; the environmental community; the paleontology and archaeology / history field; local business owners; livestock grazing permittees; private landowners; outdoor and commercial recreation interests; and the public-at-large. The call for nominations will be open for 30 days. (5/18/18) DTS 2128

**Early July.** BLM-NV proposes to publish in the Federal Register a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and land use plan amendment for the Gemini Solar Project. The proposed project, located on 7,115 acres of public land 25 miles northeast of Las Vegas, Nevada, would consist of the construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of solar modules and associated facilities necessary to generate up to 690 megawatts of electricity. (5/11/18) DTS 1983

**July 30.** BLM-ID. The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) Manager will issue a travel management plan decision for the southern portion of the NCA. In 2009, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management plans on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The NCA South Travel Management Plan is the second of five travel management plans that are underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. According to the Boise District Office, counties are generally okay with it. However, Idaho Parks & Recreation (state) and some motorized groups may appeal it. (2/7/18)

**In July.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Fortymile River System. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision will include a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and

restore the State's sovereignty over its lands. There are approximately 2,084 acres (86 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and BLM. The Notice of Application for an RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, and to give opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. (4/26/18)

**In July.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Egegik River, Becharof Lake, and Ruth Lake and Outlet. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision will include a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over its lands. There are approximately 290,983 acres of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, and to give opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The [2005 Bristol Bay Area Plan](#) from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources identified some mineral potential in the areas surrounding Egegik River and Becharof Lake. The plan also gives a summary of the region. (4/4/18)

**In July.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Taku River in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that the Taku River is navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the application, the decision will include a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over its lands. There are approximately 36,160 acres (35 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and the U.S. Forest Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, and to give opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/13/18) DTS 2055

**In July.** BLM-ES anticipates publishing in the Federal Register a Notice to reoffer a coal lease sale of 160 acres of Federal mineral estate in Jefferson, County, Alabama. The Federal tract (ALES 55199) is adjacent to the existing Narley Mine No. 3 (fee land) permitted under the Alabama Surface Mining Commission. The tract would provide approximately 469,000 recoverable tons of federal coal. BLM-ES anticipates conducting a competitive coal lease sale in July 2018, on a date TBD within the timeframe allowed following publication of the Federal

Register notice. The Federal tract was originally offered for competitive sale on April 14, 2016. The single bid received from Best Coal, Inc. did not meet the approved Fair Market Value (minimum bid). The BLM updated its previous Fair Market Value analysis and received concurrence from the Office of Valuation Services on March 30, 2018, clearing the way for the re-offer. The Federal Register notice correspondence file was routed for review by the Office of the Solicitor on April 30, 2018. (4/4/18) DTS 14231

**In July.** BLM-NV. Secretary Zinke will be requested to sign the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 17 projects for funding. There are two Nevada signing event options: 1) Southern Nevada at Bureau of Reclamation for their Round 17 Capital Improvement Program (more than \$10 million at the dam); or 2) Northern Nevada at BLM-NV land acquisition (\$4.5 million - providing new recreation opportunity) and nearby fuels projects (\$5 million). The Executive Committee for SNPLMA requested the Interior Secretary approve \$78,002,276 of funding, including \$5 million for a Special Account Reserve and an additional \$3.2 million for SNPLMA Round 16B Craig Ranch Regional Park—a 20.57-acre acquisition project. SNPLMA funding advances the Secretary’s priorities by creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt; restoring trust and being a good neighbor; modernizing our infrastructure; achieving our goals; and leading our team forward. (3/23/18)

**Late July.** BLM-AK. The Greater Moose’s Tooth 2 (GMT2) Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is tentatively anticipated for release to the public, with a Record of Decision following shortly thereafter. The Supplemental EIS analyzes an application for oil and gas development of the GMT2 production pad in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and supplements an earlier analysis of the project in the 2004 Alpine Satellite Development Plan. Under the preferred alternative identified in the Draft Supplemental EIS, the associated pipeline and access road would cross both Kuukpik Corporation-owned lands and federally managed lands within the NPR-A. The infrastructure would also connect to the Greater Moose’s Tooth 1 development, which is eight miles away. Public meetings were held in April in various Alaska communities. BLM-AK is currently analyzing the comments received, and preparing the Final EIS document. (5/18/18)

**August 13.** BLM-AK. The BLM is preparing a joint Record of Decision (ROD) on Donlin Gold with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps has announced a Joint ROD signature date of August 13. The BLM plans to make the ROW Grant offer to Donlin Gold LLC on August 14. Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Joe Balash will sign for the BLM. On May 23, the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) was distributed for signature and will be an appendix to the joint ROD. On May 31, the BLM and SPCS will review draft ROW Grant stipulations with the applicant, Donlin Gold LLC. Weekly updates with BLM project manager Laurie Thorpe and Donlin Gold permit manager Dan Graham continue every Wednesday. Donlin Gold LLC applied for permits for an open-pit, hardrock gold mine in southwest Alaska. The site will include waste treatment and waste rock



facilities, a mill, and a natural-gas-powered power plant. BLM-AK has been participating as a cooperating agency and is responsible for ROW authorization. Donlin Gold applied for a ROW on the 316-mile proposed natural gas pipeline which would cross approximately 92 miles and 4,322 acres of largely remote and undisturbed BLM-managed lands. The affected public lands are under a 1981 Management Framework Plan and the area is included in the Bering Sea/Western Interior Resource Management Plan, currently under development.  
<http://www.DonlinGoldEIS.com>. (3/1/18)

## ONGOING ITEMS

**June 14.** BLM-CA. The 90-day public comment period will end for the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft Land Use Plan Amendment for the West Mojave Route Network Project. The Draft Supplemental EIS addresses proposed solutions for adaptive and responsible travel management planning and recreational use — including off-highway vehicle access — within the West Mojave planning area, while protecting important resources. (4/20/18)

**June 15.** BLM-CA. Bakersfield Field Office staff will meet at Case Mountain Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA) with representatives of local Native American tribes to discuss the final details in the process to designate approximately 110 miles of multi-use, non-motorized trails. Case Mountain ERMA attracts a diverse group of public land users and is especially popular with recreationalists who come to enjoy the Sierra foothills scenery and challenging single-track trail system. (5/11/18)

**Mid-June.** BLM-ID is formalizing the partnership between the BLM and the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) to establish a general framework for cooperation concerning illegal activities like trash dumping and off-road abuse resulting in natural resource damage on public lands in Idaho. The partnership will focus on BHA and BLM working cooperatively to inform the public of the problems caused by illegal activity. BHA has offered to establish a rewards program as an incentive for the public to report illegal dumping and off-road abuse on public lands. The BLM will provide a “hotline” reporting number that law enforcement will monitor and then follow up with the reporting party to acquire details of the incident and determine if further investigation is required. An MOU signing is anticipated for mid-June. (5/11/18)

**Mid-June.** BLM-UT. The Cedar City Field Office will release for public review and comment an Environmental Assessment analyzing a proposal to gather excess wild horses from the North Hills Joint Management Area multiple times over a 10-year period. The initial gather would include removal of excess wild horses. Subsequent gathers could include population control actions such as fertility vaccine treatments and adjustments of stud-to-mare ratio. The joint management area is approximately 74,000 acres in size and consists of the North Hills Herd Management Area and North Hills Wild Horse Territory in the BLM Cedar City Field Office and

the Forest Service Pine Valley Ranger District. Current estimated population is 212 with a projected number of 254 by February 2019. The BLM proposes to gather and remove approximately 214 horses to reach the low Appropriate Management Level of 40. This gather will most likely not be controversial, as it is supported by local permittees. (5/11/18)

**June 20 – 21.** BLM-WY. The BLM Wyoming State Office will hold its quarterly online oil and gas lease sale, which will include 162 parcels totaling 198,589 acres. BLM-WY received nominations for 178 parcels containing 227,503 acres. One whole parcel and portions of three additional parcels totaling 2,212 acres were deferred because they are located in the State of Wyoming Version 4 Core Area Maps, but are not in Priority Habitat Management Areas in the BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plans. (Version 4 Core area maps are the most recent maps produced by the state of Wyoming identifying priority habitat management areas for Greater Sage-grouse, also known as core areas.) Twelve additional whole parcels and portions of six additional parcels were deleted because they are closed to leasing in the Approved Resource Management Plans. Forty-four parcels totaling 57,480 acres are located in Greater Sage-Grouse Priority Habitat Management Areas. Eighty-nine parcels totaling 99,255 acres are located within General Habitat Management Areas. Thirty parcels totaling 42,563 acres have portions located in both Priority and General habitat Management Areas. (5/11/18)

**June 21.** BLM-ES will hold a competitive online oil and gas lease sale of 24 parcels, all of which are split estate with private surface. The combined parcels total 2,202.87 acres and are located in Cleburne and Van Buren Counties, Arkansas. The sale noticed was published on April 10, beginning a 10-day protest period that ended April 20. No protests have been received. (4/11/18)

**June 21 – 24.** BLM-AK. The Glennallen Field Office will partner with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing to host wounded veterans in the Delta Wild and Scenic River corridor. This event provides physical and emotional rehabilitation for wounded soldiers, veterans, and their families. Participants will exercise fly-fishing techniques honed over winter and experience the rich, aquatic habitat of the Delta Wild and Scenic River and Tangle Lakes Archaeological District. [www.projecthealingwaters.org](http://www.projecthealingwaters.org) (5/4/18)

**June 24.** BLM-ID. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), through the BLM, is requesting approval of a Public Land Order (PLO) that would withdraw 107.02 acres of USFS-administered lands within the Salmon-Challis National Forest from settlement, sale, location or entry under the public land laws, including the U.S. mining laws, for a period of 20 years. The purpose of the withdrawal is to conserve the hydrologic values and fishery in the Salmon River watershed through protection of the USFS Dump Creek Diversion Ditch, a \$2.4-million canal that is part of a larger infrastructure network designed to protect recreational opportunities on the Salmon River. The land was segregated from the mining laws through 81 CFR 41333, which will automatically expire on June 24, 2018, after which the lands will be open to location and entry

under the U.S. mining laws. No controversy regarding the withdrawal is expected. The USFS completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and offered to hold public meetings through local papers and the Federal Register. No groups or individuals requested a public meeting, and no substantial comments were received on the EA. (5/4/18) DTS Lands 167

**June 25 – 29.** BLM-CA State Director Jerry Perez plans to conduct courtesy visits with members and staff of the California congressional delegation in Washington D.C. to discuss public land management issues, including oil and gas development, planning efforts, wildfire, renewable energy, and recreation. (5/18/18)

**June 27 – 28.** BLM-NV. The Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council proposes to meet in Caliente, NV. Agenda items include updates on the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area recreation fee business plan, utility and transmission corridors planning updates, wildlife management and a tour of the Lincoln County Trail System. (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM State, District, and Field Offices anticipate beginning field-level review of a revised draft of H-4150, Unauthorized Grazing Use. The handbook is being updated to respond to GAO Report-16-559, Unauthorized Grazing, which included a recommendation to revise the BLM's Unauthorized Grazing Use Handbook to make it consistent with 43 CFR 4100. The handbook was last released in 1977 and 1984. The completion date for revision is March 31, 2019. This handbook aims to help field managers comply with 43 CFR 4150 for procedural direction and standards for prevention and control of unauthorized grazing use on BLM-administered lands. (5/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register Notice announcing a Call for Nominations and Comments on tracts available for leasing for the 2018 National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) oil and gas lease sale. Publication of the Notice begins a 30-day comment/nomination period. The BLM is required to publish the Notice of Sale at least 30 days before the sale. BLM-AK has corresponded sale dates with the State of Alaska's lease sales since 2010, generally during November or December each year. The State of Alaska will offer lease tracts adjacent to the NPR-A on that coordinated date. A briefing paper on the litigation of Determination of NEPA Adequacy from the 2016 and 2017 lease sales is included in the package outlining the two lawsuits. All parties have agreed to an expedited briefing schedule that will conclude Aug. 7, 2018 for the court to make a determination. The NPR-A is exempt from Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and it is not a multiple-use unit guided by a resource management plan. Instead, the BLM utilizes an "integrated activity plan" or IAP. Each lease sale goes through a review to determine NEPA adequacy and the 2018 lease sale is expected to follow the same process as all annual lease sales since 2011, when they were directed by Presidential Order. (5/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-AZ. BLM Arizona will publish its Record of Decision (ROD) for Recreational Target Shooting in the Sonoran Desert National Monument. A March 2015 federal court order

required the BLM to re-analyze impacts of recreational target shooting on the monument. The ROD, which was developed after extensive public outreach and analysis, preserves access for target shooting on nearly 90% of the monument, while ensuring public safety in the area of heaviest family recreation use—the Juan Bautista de Anza Recreation Management Zone (RMZ). The ROD was filed with U.S. District Court in Phoenix on March 5, 2018, and the announcement will coincide with publication of the Notice of the Availability in the Federal Register. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1976

**In June.** BLM-CA. The Barstow Field Office anticipates release of a Street Legal Only Environmental Assessment for County-maintained roads on BLM-managed public lands in San Bernardino County. This action is at the request of the County, and initiates a 30-day public comment period. The BLM portion of the roads maintained by the County are not covered by any BLM authorization. The BLM has been in discussions with the County concerning obtaining proper right-of-way authorization. (5/11/18)

**In June.** BLM-CA. The BLM anticipates publishing in the Federal Register a 60-day notice to seek public comment on a proposed direct sale of 70 acres of public land in San Bernardino County to OMYA Inc., a global producer of calcium carbonate and distributor of specialty chemicals. The proposed land sale would allow the company to continue mining the high-calcium limestone deposits in the area through 2055, resolve past unauthorized mining operations, and meet OMYA's need for additional land. This proposal would also be consistent with the Amended Mining and Reclamation Plan approved by the County of San Bernardino. Located in the vicinity of Lucerne Valley, OMYA Inc.'s mining operation generates more than \$800,000 per year in county taxes and provides jobs for approximately 100 workers from the surrounding communities. (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-CO. The Gunnison Field Office is preparing a Notice of Availability (NOA) and preliminary Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on its proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment to assess domestic sheep permit renewals on 16 livestock grazing allotments in Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Juan counties. The EIS evaluates reducing contact between domestic sheep on BLM-managed lands and wild sheep populations to minimize disease transmission. The Field Office is planning for a June 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval) in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**In June.** BLM-ES is working with the U.S. Coast Guard on a withdrawal revocation package for Lot 22 of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA), Florida. The package was sent April 12, 2018 to the Knoxville Field Solicitor's Office for legal sufficiency review. The BLM is the primary administrator of the 120-acre ONA, engaging in shared stewardship of the site in collaboration with local partners. The U.S. Coast Guard submitted a Notice of Intent to Relinquish Lot 22 (16.41 acres) to the BLM in June 2017. Lot 22 includes the lighthouse, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and receives more than

75,000 visitors annually. The BLM is currently in the suitability determination phase of the relinquishment, which includes an environmental assessment, preparation of a suitability report, completion of a NEPA compliance document, and publication of a Notice in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**In June.** BLM-ES will submit a Federal Register notice for a solicitation for bids for a competitive 10-year renewable lease of the Equestrian Facility at the Meadowood Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) near Lorton, Va. The lease will be issued under Section 302 of the Federal Land and Policy Management Act (FLPMA), and 43 CFR 2920. Issuance of the lease will bring BLM-ES in compliance with BLM IM 2016-030, “Guidance for Issuing Commercial Leases for Recreation-Related Businesses,” promulgated in response to the Office of Inspector General’s March 30, 2015 report, “Review of Bureau of Land Management’s Concession Management Practices.” (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-ID. The Four Rivers Field Office is working with the Land Trust of Treasure Valley (LTTV) on the acquisition of 560 acres in the Boise Foothills. The LTTV purchased the property in February 2018 and will transfer the parcel to the BLM through a bargain sale agreement. BLM Idaho intends to use FY17 Land and Water Conservation Fund Recreation Access funds for this purchase. These funds were available because the appraisal for another FY17 project came in lower than expected, which resulted in excess funds. The property is a critical piece that will provide public access to public lands in the Stack Rock area from the Avimor trail system. This property was identified in the Ridge to Rivers 10-Year Management Plan (in which the BLM is a managing partner) as a high-priority objective for obtaining public access for hunters and other recreationists. The property is also important winter range for big game, especially elk, and is in the most popular big game hunting unit in Idaho. The LTTV issued a press release on April 4 regarding their purchase of this property. A BLM press release will likely be issued in June when scoping is initiated, and again when the purchase takes place in late summer or early fall 2018. This final release could include statements from the Secretary, the BLM, the City of Boise, and/or Avimor. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-MT/DK. The Lewistown Field Office is preparing a Notice of Realty Action for Federal Register publication announcing the BLM’s classification of 80 acres at Bynum Reservoir in Teton County, Mont., as suitable for conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The Federal Register Notice will also inform the public that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has applied to have the land conveyed from the BLM to MFWP. MFWP has maintained a fishing and recreation access site on Bynum Reservoir for over 20 years with a right-of-way from the BLM. The BLM Lewistown Field Office will convey the 80 acres to MFWP under the condition that the State will never sell the land or change its current recreational use; otherwise the land will return to the BLM. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 2130

**In June.** BLM-MT/DK. The Missoula Field Office will hold the Black Sheep Timber Sale to salvage timber from BLM lands within the perimeter of the Little Hogback fire near Ram Mountain. The Little Hogback fire burned 43,733 acres in July 2017, of which 3,766 acres was on BLM-administered lands managed by the Missoula Field Office. The Field Office will be salvaging fire-burned and beetle-killed timber from 250 acres within the fire perimeter. The Field Office anticipates a yield of 1,500 to 2,000 MBF, which equates to about 500 log truckloads. This sale is not expected to generate any controversy. (3/16/18)

**In June.** BLM-NV. The Tonopah Field Office is proposing a non-competitive (direct) sale of 221.68 acres of public land to Esmeralda County to resolve inadvertent unauthorized occupancy issues within the historic mining town of Gold Point. The parcel would be sold at the appraised fair market value. The BLM will open a 45-day public comment period on the sale, with an aim to publish the Federal Register notice in June. The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. The Federal Register package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/11/18) DTS 2015

**In June.** BLM-NV. The Ely District will release the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Gold Rock Mine Project. The BLM will not issue a final decision on the proposed project for a minimum of 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The proposed project would add 300 direct jobs during construction and 150 to 250 direct jobs during peak mining operations. The project is located 50 west of Ely and 30 miles southeast of Eureka in rural White Pine County, Nevada. White Pine County and Eureka County are supportive of the project and the local rural economic development it will bring. Local livestock grazing permittees have expressed concern about the loss of forage within the fenced mine area, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife has expressed concerns about the project in regard to impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse and crucial mule deer winter habitat. The mining company has included voluntary mitigation to reduce these impacts. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT is considering the non-competitive, direct sale to PacifiCorp of 200 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to PacifiCorp non-competitively due to the lack of public access and their ownership of the surrounding lands, pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-3(a)(4). Conveyance of the identified public lands would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18) DTS 1984

**In June.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office intends to issue a decision authorizing a Special Recreation Permit to Pinnacle Helicopters LLC for a shuttle service for river clients from the Canyonlands Field Airport to Mineral Bottom Airstrip. The proposal is controversial due to potential impacts to other visitors' experiences, and an unrelated proposal from the same company to also conduct helicopter shuttles in Blue John Canyon, immediately south of

Canyonlands National Park and near the Horseshoe Canyon Wilderness Study Area managed by the BLM Richfield Field Office. That request garnered regional media attention. (3/7/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT expects to approve a Final Environmental Impact Statement for Alton Coal, which seeks to expand its existing mine by leasing federal coal on 3,581 acres of public and private lands near Alton, Utah. The Alton Coal Tract contains 59.6 million tons of bituminous coal, and the proposed action could extend mining operations by 25 years. The lease sale needs to occur by summer 2018 for continuous operations. (2/21/18) DTS 2032

**In June.** BLM-WY anticipates publishing the Notice of Availability for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Normally Pressured Lance (NPL) Project. The Federal Register package is currently under review in Washington D.C. The proposed project includes drilling up to 3,500 directional natural gas wells over a 10-year period on approximately 140,000 acres. The NPL project is projected to yield between 3.5 to 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and between 17.5 to 140 million barrels of oil over its estimated 40-year life. Project revenues are estimated at \$17.8 billion with federal royalties amounting to about \$2.2 billion, of which about \$1.1 billion would go to the State of Wyoming. The project would also bring about 954 full time jobs to the region during development. (2/21/18)

**In June or July.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will finalize the Skull Valley land exchange. This exchange is a single-transaction, multi-parcel exchange wherein the United States would convey 12,603.27 acres of Federal land for 11,586.32 acres of non-Federal land. The exchange would consolidate Federal and non-Federal ownership, provide management efficiency, and increase public access opportunities. The BLM would acquire 3,598 acres of mule deer crucial range, 1,417 acres of pronghorn crucial range, a 120-acre portion of the Pony Express National Historic Trail, and 587 acres of inholdings within the Cedar Mountain Wilderness Area. This acquisition of lands in a wilderness area would be important for providing improved public access to an area that is popular with hunters, minimizing the complexity of BLM's fire suppression responsibility in a fire-prone area, and reducing the burden to a private landowner with inholdings in a wilderness area. (4/11/18)

**July 8.** BLM-CO. The 90-day public review period will close for the Little Snake Field Office's 1,870-mile route inventory across 638,195 acres of BLM-managed land. The review period began on April 9, 2018. This is the third and final Field Office travel management area to undergo this first public step of travel management. The public is being asked to review the inventory for accuracy and completeness, giving them the opportunity to help finalize a working map of the routes for the planning effort. The public will have several opportunities for review as the process to designate routes progresses over the next year. (3/30/18)

**July 9.** BLM-UT. The Fillmore Field Office expects to approve a Plan of Operations for the Scipio Pass Quarry located in Millard County. A Plan of Operations for this new project was submitted on April 17, 2018, by Clyde Companies. The Fillmore Field Office will provide



comments to Clyde prior to the regulatory 30-day deadline. The 120-acre quarry will produce limestone aggregate for highway construction projects, so it has potential for local employment and therefore, local support. This project may become controversial due to its size and proximity to Interstate 15 at Scipio Pass and it is anticipated that environmental organizations and Tribes may not support the project. Potential issues include visual, cultural, air quality, and wildlife. The Plan of Operations and subsequent Environmental Assessment will include public review and comment. (4/26/18)

**July 12 – 17.** The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) 2018 Annual Conference will be held in Eugene, Oregon. This Annual Conference will bring together over 300 U.S. and Canadian fish and wildlife regulators to discuss shared biological, management, and land use issues. This event attracts professional fish and wildlife biologists (including commissioners and directors from over 20 states), managers, administrators, and others in fish and wildlife related fields. A conference approval package is being prepared. (4/26/18)

**July 17 – 18.** BLM-NV. The Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) proposes to hold a meeting in Elko. Agenda items include wildfire and wildlife management, district reports and a presentation on the IL Ranch conservation program. The RAC will take a field trip on the second day to the IL Ranch, a facility owned and operated by Newmont Mining Company. The field trip will include a tour of the ranch and associated facilities and an update on the ranch's habitat restoration projects. (4/20/18)

**July 20.** BLM-ID. The Bruneau Field Office is considering whether to renew the Battle Creek, East Castle Creek, and Owens grazing allotments in Owyhee County for a term of 10 years. The area covers 244,529 acres and there are nine affected permittees. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared to disclose and analyze the impacts of renewing the grazing permits. The EA will provide a range of alternatives aimed at flexible and economically sustainable grazing authorizations, adaptive management, opportunities to reduce cheatgrass, and enhancing riparian areas. The proposed decisions on whether to renew the grazing permits are anticipated to be issued by July 20. (5/4/18)

**July 20 – 30.** BLM-CO will issue the sale notice and 10-day protest period for the Sep. 6, 2018 oil and gas lease sale for 25 parcels totaling approximately 21,762 acres in Huerfano, Kiowa, Lincoln, Washington and Weld Counties. Eleven parcels totaling approximately 18,358 acres in Huerfano County outside and east of Great Sand Dunes National Park's boundary have received significant media coverage. The Huerfano County parcels, because of their proximity to Great Sand Dunes National Park, have generated ongoing controversy since the public comment period for the sale's environmental assessment was announced. The announcement date and length of the protest period follows guidance in IM 2018-034. (4/4/18)

**July 22 – 26.** BLM-OR/WA. The Rural Sociological Society's national meeting will take place in Portland, Ore. During the meeting, Burns District BLM Manager Jeff Rose will participate in

a panel discussion that will address local, regional, and national implications of the 2016 Malheur occupation, with a particular focus on science and its relationship with environmental concerns, tribal rights, livelihoods, populism, fairness, and other questions in public lands management. Jeff Rose is currently working on his remarks for the meeting. (4/11/18)

**July 26.** BLM-NV staff will give a presentation to the Nevada State Legislative Committee on Public Lands in Battle Mountain. The topic will be an update on BLM activities in northern Nevada. This meeting was rescheduled from March 2, when it was postponed due to inclement weather. (4/11/18)

**July 29.** BLM-NV. A temporary closure order is proposed to go into effect for the annual Burning Man event on the Black Rock Playa in the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon – Emigrant Trail National Conservation Area. The temporary closure provides protection for public safety and resources before, during, and after the event. The closure area is focused on the event site only and leaves the vast majority of the Black Rock Playa open for public use. The Federal Register notice announcing the closure would be published on June 22. Burning Man is the largest special recreation permit issued by the BLM. This arts and lifestyle festival brings 70,000 participants to BLM-managed public land for the week leading up to the Labor Day weekend. This year's event is from Aug. 24 – Sep. 4. (5/11/18) DTS 2121

**In July.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office will release the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) related to development of the proposed Sonoran Valley Parkway Project (SVPP) by the City of Goodyear in Maricopa County, Arizona. This project provides the opportunity to create immediate and future jobs, help bolster the growing local economy, and reduce emergency service response times. The City has approximately 77,000 residents and is part of the Phoenix-metropolitan area, which has approximately 4.5 million residents. The SVPP will provide needed enhancements to infrastructure as the area is projected to experience significant growth. The proposed project would involve approximately 475 acres of BLM-managed public lands. The package was returned to BLM-AZ for revisions. (4/4/18) DTS 1775

**In July.** BLM-UT intends to publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Bears Ears National Monument Proposed Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOA initiates a 90-day public review and comment period. The NOA will be uploaded to DTS when the package is complete and ready for review. (5/18/18)

**In July.** BLM-UT intends to publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Proposed Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOA initiates a 90-day public review and comment period. The NOA will be uploaded to DTS when the package is ready for review. (5/18/18)

**In July.** BLM-UT. The BLM-UT State Office will terminate the San Rafael Swell Master Leasing Plan Amendment process. Since the publication of the Notice of Intent for this plan,

BLM Washington Office Instruction Memo 2018-034 was issued, terminating the Master Leasing Plan process. A Federal Register Notice of Termination has been submitted to WO-630 for processing. There are no plans for a press release or public meeting as this is an administrative action. (4/26/18) DTS 2105

**August 1.** BLM-MT/DK. The Western Montana District is proposing to complete a fee purchase acquisition using approved Land and Water Conservation Fund funding in the amount of \$1,025,000. The privately owned 307.57-acre parcel is located 23 miles south of Ennis, Montana. The parcel lies adjacent to BLM-administered lands (Dillon Field Office) within the Upper River Special Recreation Management Area along the Madison River. There would be increased access to 880 acres of BLM-managed lands, which would provide approximately 4.5 miles of additional access to the Madison River. The proposed date for this acquisition is Aug. 1, 2018. Willing landowners would like to complete the transaction as soon as possible. The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Madison County Commissioners support the BLM acquiring the private parcel. An appraisal, NEPA analysis, and Endangered Species Act work have been completed. No controversy is expected. (3/7/18)

**August 2.** The public comment period ends for the six state Draft Greater Sage-grouse Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) that were published in the Federal Register on May 4. Secretarial Order 3355, issued on August 1, 2017, directed DOI agencies to "... complete each Final EIS ... within 1 year from the issuance of a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS." Six states are producing EISs reflecting planning amendment changes. (4/26/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office (LSFO) received an application under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) from the Pinal County Board of Supervisors to lease 498.04 acres of land for development of recreation-related facilities near Gold Canyon, AZ. Pinal County is one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S., and hopes to ensure availability of recreation activities on public lands to Pinal County residents. The County leadership is planning opportunities to provide public recreational access for hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, tent camping, an equestrian area, and picnic locations. (4/4/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-AZ. The Phoenix District Office is proposing a non-competitive (direct) sale of 16.87 acres of surface estate. The Lubich family has been occupying the parcel for approximately 96 years, predating mining regulations. This direct sale would resolve an unauthorized occupancy of the land. The proposed sale property is located in Gila County, Arizona, approximately six miles west of the city of Globe. Approval of the Notice of Realty Action document would provide specific information to the public of a proposed direct land sale, opening a comment period of 45 days. BLM-AZ has coordinated with OVS throughout the appraisal process and on January 25, 2018, determined that the current appraisal is applicable due to no changes in the real estate market in the Globe, AZ area. The fair market value is \$75,000. (4/4/18) DTS 1878

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CA expects to release the Final Central Coast Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for oil and gas leasing and development for a 30-day public protest period in summer 2018. BLM-CA published the Draft RMP and Draft EIS on Jan. 6, 2017, initiating a 90-day public comment period that closed April 6, 2017. The Draft RMP Amendment/Draft EIS analyze alternatives for the planning and management of oil and gas leasing and development on public lands administered by the Central Coast Field Office. In response to a settlement agreement resulting from litigation in 2011-2012 contesting oil and gas lease sales in the Central California Field Office, BLM-CA prepares quarterly status reports for the Regional Solicitor and the Department of Justice to forward to the District Court regarding progress on preparation of an RMP Amendment for oil and gas and the accompanying EIS. (3/30/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office has prepared a Notice of Realty Action for a direct sale of 7.55 acres to resolve a longstanding trespass issue. Anderson Summer Camp purchased property and associated buildings in Eagle County in 1979. In 2014, the camp discovered that some of their base and other buildings are located on BLM lands. They notified the BLM when they discovered this. The Field Office is planning for a summer 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. (4/11/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will release a Draft Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Colorado River between Parshall and State Bridge for a 30-day public review period. The RAMP addresses alternatives to better manage increasing use in this area, which sees more than 90,000 float-boaters and anglers each season. Alternatives include adding unlimited day-use permits, expanding a developed campground and designating river campsites. (3/16/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of 0.16 acres in Garfield County to adjacent landowners who inadvertently built part of their home on BLM-managed land. The Field Office is planning for a summer 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The sale is part of an IBLA case settlement to resolve this long-standing trespass issue. As part of the settlement, the landowners agreed to two easements across their private land to access BLM lands with no previous legal access. (3/7/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Rocky Mountain District and Royal Gorge Field Office will meet with representatives from Senator Gardner's staff to discuss recreational mineral collection in the Cache Creek Placer Area. BLM acquired Cache Creek – a 2,160-acre parcel – in 2000 through the Land and Water Conservation program. The Cache Creek Placer Area Management Plan, approved February 2016, requires individuals to obtain a Special Recreation Permit to collect minerals recreationally in Cache Creek with stipulations defining allowed uses and

locations, as well as prohibited acts to prevent resource damage. While mineral deposits exist on the property, and there is interest in claim staking in the area, the parcel is not open to the General Mining Law of 1872 since it was acquired post-FLPMA. (4/4/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office will begin initiating the management plan for two parcels acquired in March 2017 through the Sutey Ranch Land Exchange after a Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. The Colorado River Valley Field Office is planning for a summer 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval). The planning effort will result in an amendment to the approved Colorado River Valley Resource Management Plan. The 557-acre Sutey Ranch parcel includes high wildlife value and high potential for recreation. The 112-acre Haines parcel is popular with mountain bikers in particular. There is significant community interest in this planning effort. (3/7/18) DTS 1999

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office is preparing a Notice of Realty Action for a direct sale of 0.8 acres near Gold Hill in Boulder County to an adjacent landowner. The sale would resolve a long-standing and unintentional unauthorized use issue. The Field Office is planning for a summer 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The parcel is surrounded by private lands with limited public access. (3/23/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office has prepared a Notice of Availability and preliminary environmental assessment for a draft amendment to its 2015 Resource Management Plan (RMP) as it evaluates designating 17 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). The effort addresses an error in the Tres Rios RMP, which did not adequately address nominated ACECs. The field office is planning for a summer 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). The key issues include potential impacts to solid minerals exploration and production, as well as restrictions on access and rights-of-way. (3/23/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office is preparing a Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan (RMP). The plan includes decisions on approximately 658,200 acres of BLM-administered lands and 3.3 million acres of subsurface Federal mineral estate across 37 counties. The Eastern Colorado RMP will replace the 1996 Royal Gorge Resource Management Plan and the 1986 Northeast Resource Management Plan (amended in 1991). The RGFO is planning for summer 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). (4/26/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Gunnison Field Office (GFO) is preparing a Notice of Realty Action on its proposal to convey approximately 43.09 acres of public land under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act to the Town of Lake City. The land is located about one mile south of Lake City. The Lake City Ski Hill community ski area would continue to operate under the conveyance. The GFO is planning for a summer 2018 publication in the Federal Register (pending WO and DOI approval). (4/26/18)

**Summer 2018.** BLM-CO. The Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) expects to receive a proposal from American Gypsum to expand its approximately 412-acre gypsum mining pit to approximately 800 acres. Once the final proposal is received, CRVFO will begin an environmental review. American Gypsum operates Colorado's largest gypsum mine, located entirely on BLM lands in Eagle County. The mine and its associated drywall plant employs nearly 100 people. (5/4/18)

#### Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

##### **NEW ITEMS**

**On June 28-29**, the BOEM/National Academies Committee on Offshore Science and Assessment will meet in Washington DC. The primary agenda item will be receiving input from the Committee on a diverse set of ideas for future studies that BOEM has collected through its studies planning process. (5/25/18)

##### **UPDATED ITEMS**

**By the end of June**, Deepwater Wind is expected to submit a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) for their South Fork project located offshore New York. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for this COP is in surnaming with ASLM. BOEM has deemed the EIS to be unusually complex and is drafting a page limit waiver per the Department's April 27 guidance. (4/27/18)

##### **ONGOING ITEMS**

**On June 15**, BOEM will meet with representatives from the State of Hawaii and staff from Hawaiian Congressional member state offices to discuss potential paths forward for the competitive planning and leasing process for offshore wind following a February 2017 response from DoD excluding much of the June 2016 Call for Information and Nominations Area as part of DoD's mission compatibility assessment. (4/27/18)

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

##### **NEW ITEMS**

Labor Secretary Fitzgerald Washington from the Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) contacted the Mid-Continent Regional (MCR) office on May 9 & 14, 2018 concerning use of the Walker County Soil and Water Conservation District Board (WCB) via state cooperative agreement for Abandoned Mine Lands projects in Alabama for the upcoming program year beginning **July 1, 2018**. During two different phone conversations, the AML grants to Alabama and the options the ADOL had with the WCB were discussed. Mr. Washington has had discussions with at least one Congressional Member about the impact to the WCB if the ADOL discontinued use of or significantly reduced the AML projects and site maintenance completed by the WCB. In prior years, the WCB had annually completed over \$1M of projects and

maintenance. The latest proposal from the ADOL established a limit on the cooperative agreement of \$200,000. The MCR staff told Mr. Washington that the cooperative agreement is between the ADOL and the WCB, and must only be used for AML activities by the WCB under the direction of the ADOL, and must be done in an efficient and reasonable manner in accordance with applicable Federal and state regulations. (5/22/2018)

## UPDATED ITEMS

None to report.

## ONGOING ITEMS

**By June 30, 2018**, OSMRE expects the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a lease for the Oklahoma Federal Lands: **Pollyanna #8 coal mine** permit revision. The applicant's existing coal reserves are expected to be depleted in less than 12 months; therefore, the additional coal reserve is needed to ensure continuous operations. BLM has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the coal lease on the expansion of the underground mine and is expected to have the draft lease completed in the upcoming weeks. With finalization of the leasing documents, OSMRE will be working on the development of a Mine Plan Decision Document (MPDD). Based upon OSMRE's close coordination with BLM during the development of the EA for the lease, we anticipate being able to adopt large portions of their EA for our MPDD. Future steps will include evaluation of the BLM EA for determination of NEPA adequacy, developing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EA, if needed, expected to be completed within 2 weeks following draft lease, followed by developing the EA and posting it for public review. Depending upon how much of the BLM EA that is adopted, the MPDD could be completed by July 31, 2018. (4/3/2018)

**By June 30, 2018**, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for the **Liberty #8** coal mine. The new lease by application covers 1,620 acres of surface mining activities. OSMRE is expected to be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss with the mining company processing procedures, outline NEPA responsibilities, the development of a schedule associated with leasing and the process of a mining plan decision document. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

Pending a state approval of the permit revision on or around June 15, OSMRE plans to submit the Falkirk Mine's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM on or **around June 25**. Falkirk Mining Company's Falkirk Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in McLean County, ND. The mine employs 412 full-time employees and 118

temporary employees and produces approximately 8 – 8.5 million tons of coal per year.  
(3/15/2018)

BLM has provided a draft MOU to OSMRE and to the Oklahoma Department of Mines (ODM), requesting the agencies' participation in BLM's NEPA review process relating to Federal coal mineral leasing. Unlike previous MOUs between BLM and OSMRE in the Mid-Continent Region which were issued project by project, this document is intended to serve as an umbrella MOU for all related BLM coal mineral leasing activities in the State of Oklahoma. As indicated, this new draft MOU also formally includes ODM as a cooperating agency. OSMRE and ODM provided comments on the draft MOU the week of May 7, 2018. OSMRE anticipates the final MOU will be ready for signature by **June 30, 2018**. (5/16/2018)

### **Awareness**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

The maritime boundary between the U.S. and The Bahamas is in dispute. The last discussions occurred in 2012. At the request of The Bahamas, on April 24 and 26, the U.S., including the State Department, BOEM, and NOAA, and The Bahamas held informal discussions on the maritime boundary in advance of formal negotiations, which will take place in The Bahamas on **June 11-13**. BOEM will participate in the formal negotiations. (5/25/18)

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

On May 10, 2018, Energy XXI Gulf Coast (EGC) met with BOEM and BSEE to present information on a proposed transfer of non-core EGC assets to Offshore Environmental Fund (OEF), an affiliate of Orinoco Natural Resources (Orinoco). EGC and its subsidiaries currently have \$2.3 billion in decommissioning liability and \$78.7 million in sole liability. The numbers are not final, but the transaction could potentially transfer one-third or more of EGC's sole liability to OEF. EGC would provide OEF \$25 million in cash (funded from BOEM bond releases) and \$100 million from a 2nd lien note. OEF would also gain 35% equity ownership in EGC. The transaction is estimated to close in August of 2018. EGC is requesting that BOEM release \$51.9 million (\$38.6 million on WD 73 and \$13.4 million on MP 61) that it posted in June of 2015. Both are non-sole properties and EGC would like to redistribute the bonds to sole properties. (5/18/18)

#### **ONGOING ITEMS**

**On June 6**, the Acting Director will be a keynote speaker at the General Meeting of the Offshore Operators Committee in Austin, TX.

**On June 7**, the Acting Director will be a keynote speaker at the US Offshore Wind Conference and Exhibition in Boston, MA.



## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND BUDGET**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

#### **Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget**

From June 4-8, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, with the delegated authority of the Assistant Secretary, Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings.

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)**

On June 4, the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert and U.S. Forest Service Acting Chief Vicki Christiansen will brief staff from the House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Federal Lands on the outlook for the upcoming fire season. (05/13/2018)

From June 4-7, an Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) representative (TBD) will attend the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) National Indian Timber Symposium to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. The meeting will be held in Ocean Shores, WA. (05/18/2018)

On June 5, the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Rupert is tentatively scheduled testify before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee at an oversight hearing on wildland fire management. U.S. Forest Service Acting Chief Vicki Christiansen would also testify. (05/18/2018)

#### **Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)**

On June 6, the Royalty Policy Committee will conduct its next public meeting, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. On the 5th, the sectors will meet to review their presentations for the public meeting. On the 6th the full Committee will meet to present recommendations, hold public comment, debate, and vote on recommendations to the Secretary. The meeting notice was published in the Federal Register on May 17, 2018. (05/16/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)**

On June 8, the Alaska Cooperative Planning Group, which is composed of Alaska-based DOI bureau and office leadership (including the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) Anchorage), will meet in Anchorage, Alaska, to brainstorm ideas for the proposed Departmental reorganization (no press).

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary – Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)**

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**[UPDATE]** The House Appropriations Committee markup of the FY19 Interior bill was postponed from May 22. The mark up is expected to be rescheduled after the Memorial Day recess. (05/30/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

The week of June 11, the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee is expected to mark up the FY 2019 Interior Appropriations Bill. (05/23/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

## **NEW ITEMS**

**[NEW]** The Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) is coordinating natural and cultural resource issues related to the Kilauea Volcano disaster under FEMA Mission Assignment issued to DOI under Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11. Issues being worked include mitigating the spread of invasive species, coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office, and communicating with the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations. The OEPC is the Department's Principal Planner for ESF #11 Protection of Natural and Cultural Resources and Historic Properties. (05/30/2018)

**[NEW]** From June 11-14, the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) Executive Director will participate in the annual meeting of the Biodiversity Funders Group in Kona, Hawaii, to make a presentation on the impacts of invasive species on biodiversity (no press). (05/30/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Technology, Information and Business Services (DAS TIBS)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 12, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) is facilitating an Energy Summit in the MIB South Penthouse. Secretary Zinke is scheduled to participate in the event which is expected to draw about 60 people from within the Federal government and industry representatives. The event is led by Vincent DeVito, the Counselor for Energy Policy in Interior. (05/23/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

From June 11-14, the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert and Deputy Assistant Secretary Humbert will attend the Wildland Fire Leadership Council Meeting to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. The meeting will be held in Colorado Springs, CO. (04/23/2018).

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Human Capital and Diversity (DAS HCD)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Natural Resources Revenue Management (DAS NRRM)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

From June 18-22, PDAS Scott Cameron will be in Denver and Wyoming to participate in an Interior Business Center (IBC) building reopening with the GSA Administrator at the Denver Federal Center, participate in an employee listening session and related activities associated with implementing the PMB workplace harassment action plan, and visiting with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Defense (DOD), and Wyoming state and private partners on cooperative rangeland management of invasive weeds. (05/23/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

*[UPDATE]* On June 20, the Deputy Secretary and Principal DAS/PMB are scheduled to meet with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the 2018 Strategic Review, in accordance with the OMB Director's memorandum M-18-15. The Strategic Review will assess and discuss

performance goals and progress in implementing initiatives identified in the President's Management Agenda. (05/30/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Technology, Information and Business Services (DAS TIBS)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**[UPDATE]** On July 4, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) will facilitate the 2018 Convocation Awards Ceremony in the MIB Yates Auditorium in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources. (05/30/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On July 4, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) will coordinate and facilitate the Annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration events in the Secretary and Deputy Secretary's Offices as well as the South Penthouse & rooftop. (05/23/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

From June 18-22, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will host approximately 50 members of the DOI emergency management community at the annual Emergency Management Council (EMC) Off-Site Workshop at NCTC. The workshop provides a forum for information sharing and collaboration on a number of overarching issues and will include a combination of keynote speakers, presentations, and working sessions. (05/16/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Natural Resources Revenue Management (DAS NRRM)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

From June 19-21, the Fort Berthold Federal Partners Meeting will take place in Lakewood, Colorado. On June 19, 2018 the federal partners from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Energy Steering Committee (IESC), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), Office of Special Trustee (OST), the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DEMD, Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will meet for a round table meeting to discuss open action items from the March 2018 Fort Berthold Federal Partners Meeting. (05/23/2018)

On June 20, the federal partners will meet with Chairman Mark Fox from the Three Affiliated Tribes (TAT), the TAT Tribal Business Council Segment representatives, TAT legal counsel, and the TAT Natural Resources/Energy Department to discuss open action items, identify opportunities, and discuss concerns. (05/23/2018)

On June 21, a meeting will be held on the little and big Missouri River to discuss communitization agreements and cadastral surveys. This meeting will include the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Energy Steering Committee (IESC), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR). (05/23/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Human Capital and Diversity (DAS HCD)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On July 4, the Honor Awards Convocation will be held in the Main Interior Building Auditorium. Sixty-one employees will be recognized for their outstanding contributions and achievements. Consistent with Departmental policy, the only awardees recognized at Convocation include recipients of the Distinguished Service Awards, Valor Awards, Safety and

Health Awards of Excellence, Aviation Safety Awards, and Citizen's Awards for Bravery.  
(05/23/2018)

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

**NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

**UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

**ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

**Awareness**

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

**NEW ITEMS**

**[NEW]** The Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director for Management, Margaret Weichert, recently presented the Association of Government Accountant's (AGA) Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting award to the Department in recognition of the FY 2017 Agency Financial Report. AGA established the award in collaboration with the Chief Financial Officers Council and the Office of Management and Budget to improve accountability by streamlining reporting and improving the effectiveness of such reports so they clearly demonstrate what agencies accomplished with taxpayer dollars, as well as remaining challenges. (no press). (05/30/2018)

**[NEW]** The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently released the final GAO report "Compacts of Free Association: Actions Needed to Prepare for the Transition of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands to Trust Fund Income" (GAO-18-415) in response to a request from the Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The GAO reviewed the role of compact grants and Federal programs in the budgets of Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). In 2003, the Federal Government approved amended compacts of free association with the FSM and RMI, providing a total of \$3.6 billion in economic assistance in fiscal years 2004 through 2023 and access to several Federal programs and services. Compact grant funding, which is overseen by the Department, generally decreases annually. The amount of this annual grant funding decrease is added to the annual U.S. contributions of the compact trust funds, which are managed by the FSM and RMI. The GAO issued Insular Affairs six recommendations to work with the compact trust fund committees in developing distribution policies and fiscal procedures for the funds and addressing the timing of

disbursements. The Department's 60-day letter addressing the recommendations is due July 16. (05/30/2018)

*[NEW]* DOI recently debarred Felicia Barlow, formerly the business manager of the Shonto Arizona Navajo Reservation's Shonto Preparatory School, based on her conviction for embezzlement of tribal funds. (05/30/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

*[UPDATE]* The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently held an entrance with the Office of Insular Affairs to discuss three audits related to the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) and Puerto Rico (PR) in response to requests from the Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; Chair and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Federal Spending, Oversight and Emergency Management; Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; the Chair and Ranking Member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform; and the Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security:

I. “USVI and PR Disaster Recovery Plans” (Job Code 102654). The GAO will review the: (1) disaster recovery and oversight plans PR and the USVI have in place and the extent Federal agencies are supporting the development and execution of these plans; (2) governing and management capacity and structure the PR and the USVI have in place to oversee and manage Federal disaster funds; and (3) challenges PR and the USVI face in complying with Federal requirements related to disaster recovery assistance.

II. “Restoration and Resilience of USVI and PR Electric Grids” (Job Code 102609). The GAO will review the: (1) authority and responsibilities Federal agencies have to help restore and improve the resilience of electricity infrastructure to natural disasters; and (2) the actions Federal agencies have taken to help restore and improve the resiliency of electricity infrastructure in response to the 2017 hurricane season, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of those actions.

III. “Community Development Block Grant Disaster Assistance” (Job Code 102592). The GAO will review: (1) challenges with the administration of Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds for the response to the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes and 2012 Super Storm Sandy; and (2) the status of funds allocated in 2017 and 2018 for the Florida, Texas, PR, and USVI storms. (Washington, DC; no press) (05/30/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR WATER AND SCIENCE**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tim Petty will participate at the Association of American State Geologists annual conference in Rehoboth Beach, DE on June 4-5. He will be in the office in DC the rest of the week, June 6-9, to participate in internal and stakeholder meetings.



On June 3 - 9, USGS Director, Dr. James Reilly, will be in Reston, Va./Washington, D.C. On June 4-5, Director Reilly will participate at the Association of American State Geologists annual conference in Rehoboth Beach, Del.

For the week of June 3, Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman will be in Washington, D.C. attending various meetings and events. This includes a meeting with the Icicle (Creek) Work Group on Wednesday (6/6) and a meeting with the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board on Thursday (6/7).

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On June 4, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the final environmental documents for a grant from the Drought Response Program to Stockton East Water District (California). The District will use federal funding to implement the Groundwater Recharge Basin, Southeast Recharge Basin Project, which will develop a 73-acre groundwater recharge basin. Reclamation provided \$300,000 in grant funds towards the project. The District will contribute the remaining funds to the \$855,400 project. (5/25/2018)

On June 4, Reclamation will host a Department of the Interior reorganization listening session for all agency bureaus with Susan Combs at the City Creek Marriott in Salt Lake City, Utah. After the listening sessions, Combs will attend Congressional staff visits at the Federal Building. A white paper of bureau's shared services is being prepared by Reclamation's Public Affairs staff. (05/29/2018)

Between June 4 and June 8, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Regional Office will send out a press release awarding a \$1.15 million financial assistance agreement to Colorado State University. The contract will allow Reclamation to continue to perform scientific studies in support of the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program during fiscal year 2018. The Recovery Program is a unique partnership of local, state, and federal agencies, water and power interests, and environmental groups working to recover endangered fish in the Upper Colorado River Basin while water development proceeds in accordance with federal and state laws and interstate compacts. (5/29/2018)

From June 4-8, Reclamation, in collaboration with California Department of Water Resources and Denver Technical Services Center, will attempt to quantify fish release site predation. The goal of the study is to assess the concept of a modified fish release delivery scheme and how it influences predation rates. (5/25/2018)

In early to mid-June, Reclamation will provide a briefing to the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science on the Platte River Program Extension. The Platte River Recovery Implementation Program Governance Committee members proposed extending the program's first 13-year

increment by an additional 13 years. The briefing will provide background information on the program and discuss Reclamation's proposed role moving forward.

On June 6, Reclamation will meet with the City of Santa Barbara, California in Fresno to discuss the water rights for Gibraltar Reservoir. These are the water rights the City would like to use for a Warren Act Contract to store water in Cachuma Reservoir and move water through the Tecolote Tunnel. (5/25/2018)

On June 8, Reclamation plans to release the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Minidoka Powerplant Unit 7 Structure maintenance and rehabilitation project at Minidoka Dam in southern Idaho. The public comment period will be from June 8 through July 9. A news release will be issued on June 8 to announce the availability of the draft EA. (5/29/2018)

In June, Reclamation will distribute a news release describing new restrictions during Red Flag Warning conditions at Lake Berryessa, California. The new restrictions prohibit all fires, including charcoal use, when Red Flag conditions are present. Propane barbeques are allowed. The National Weather Service issues Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches when weather and conditions may result in extreme fire behavior within 24 hours. A red flag warning is the highest alert. (5/25/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

In the beginning of June, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the release of a draft environmental document for public review on a Long-Term Warren Act contract for the Sacramento Suburban Water District. Execution of the "wet-year only" contract would enable the delivery of up to 29,000 acre-feet per year of Middle-Fork Project water through Folsom Reservoir for municipal and industrial uses in northern Sacramento County California. (5/7/2018)

Between June 4 and June 8, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's Environmental Resources Division will send out a press release awarding a \$1.1 million financial assistance agreement with the Navajo Nation. The agreement will allow the Navajo Nation to participate and assist with the San Juan Recovery Implementation Plan for various projects, including the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. (5/21/2018)

Between June 4 and June 15, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the data app prize competition. Reclamation, in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, is seeking the development of an application framework to support electronic data collection and capture across a diverse range of data collection situations using mobile devices. (3/26/2018)

Between June 4 and June 15, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the Long-Term Corrosion Protection of Existing Hydraulic Steel Structures prize competition. This prize competition sought ideas for long-term corrosion protection for large, hydraulic steel structures beyond the protection provided by available coatings and cathodic protection. (3/25/2018)

Between June 4 and June 15, Reclamation is planning to publish the remaining completed Rural Water Supply Program Appraisal Reports. Timing is based on when the notice is published in the Federal Register. A news release will be issued in conjunction with the notice. (1/9/2018)

Between June 4 and June 15, Reclamation will release the selected entities to receive funding under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. The funding was announced in a funding opportunity announcement this past fall. It provides funding to develop a watershed management group, fund an existing watershed group, complete watershed restoration planning activities, and design watershed management projects. (4/9/2018)

By June 4, Reclamation will announce a start date and water allocation numbers for the Klamath Project (Oregon). News releases and other communication will occur. Intense media interest is expected. (5/21/18)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 3, Reclamation's Nathan Holste is scheduled to present "Design and Analysis of Channel Restoration Features in Confined Urban Rivers" at the 2018 World Environmental & Water Resources Congress hosted by the American Society of Civil Engineers in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The theme is "Protecting and Securing Water and the Environment for Future Generations." (5/21/2018)

Between June 4 and 12, Reclamation's International Affairs Program will host its annual Safety Evaluation of Existing Dams International Technical Seminar and Study Tour. There will be 29 people from 11 countries attending this year. Technical seminars will take place in Denver, Colorado including a sample dam safety evaluation at Pueblo Dam in Colorado. On June 11-12, participants will tour Shasta, Keswick, Lewiston and Trinity Dams, part of the Central Valley Project in Northern California. This technical seminar and study tour is fully reimbursable to Reclamation by the participants. (5/21/2018)

On or about June 15, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office plans to publish a Notice in the *Federal Register* entitled: Notice of Intent to Accept Proposals, Select Lessee, and Contract for Hydroelectric Power Development at Silver Jack Dam, Bostwick Park Project, Colorado. This Notice will present background information, proposal content guidelines, and information concerning selection of a non-Federal entity to develop hydroelectric power at Silver Jack Dam, and power purchasing and/or marketing considerations. Silver Jack Dam is a Federal Reclamation project located in Colorado. Reclamation is seeking proposals to lease the right to develop hydroelectric power at Silver Jack Dam outside of Montrose, Colorado, under a Lease of Power Privilege. The potential lessee must submit proposals on or before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 19, 2018, consistent with the guidelines included in the *Federal Register Notice*. (5/7/2018)

## **U.S. Geological Survey**

## NEW ITEMS

Mark Engle of the ERP-funded Eastern Energy Resources Science Center will be giving a short, TED-style keynote talk about produced waters at the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine workshop on Environmental Legacies and Produced Water Related to Oil and Gas Production on May 30, 2018 in Denver, Colorado. It will be one of only two talks given at the workshop. Key takeaways highlight changes in sources of U.S. hydrocarbons that have shifted management options of produced waters, that poorly managed produced water can lead to deleterious environmental effects, and that well-managed produced water represents an under-utilized water resource and potential source of minerals, including strategic mineral commodities. A briefing memorandum has been compiled.

## UPDATED ITEMS

On or before June 6, USGS will highlight results from airborne seismic studies that were conducted last August in Oklahoma with the Oklahoma Geological Survey. Oklahoma has been the site of thousands of earthquakes associated with wastewater injection activity but few earthquake sequences occur on mapped faults. This makes seismic hazard difficult to estimate. Using new airborne magnetic data to image rocks miles beneath the surface where the earthquakes are occurring, revealed numerous possible faults, in the form of magnetic lineaments, which had not previously been mapped. A number of lineaments are aligned with earthquake sequences, suggesting that they represent ancient faults that have been reactivated in the induced seismicity setting. A significant number of other lineaments aren't associated with seismicity, but are oriented favorably for rupture. The new data imply significant differences in fault structures between the older, deeper basement rocks and overlying, shallower and younger sedimentary rocks on which previous fault maps were mostly based. The findings were published in *Geophysical Research Letters*. (5/10/2018)

The week of June 4th., the USGS will release a Scientific Investigation Report co-authored with the Bureau of Reclamation that compares and contrasts the two agencies' water-use information programs in the Colorado River Basin. The report also describes the legal drivers for each program, clarifies confusing terminology, compares the methods used, and contrasts the information reported by each agency. This detailed comparison shows how the different missions, programmatic drivers, and user communities of USGS and Reclamation lead to different approaches to water-use data collection, analysis, and reporting. Despite the differences, the program comparison presented in this report identifies opportunities for closer coordination and sharing of information between the two bureaus, as well as program components where inter-bureau collaboration can improve water-use estimate methodologies. This report is a companion report that contains water-use estimates for 11 categories of use in drainage basins (HUC-8) within the Colorado River Basin (CRB). These reports will be released at the same time. (3/6/2018)

The week of June 4th., the Water Resources Mission Area will release a new report and data release that contains water-use estimates for 11 categories of use in drainage basins (HUC-8)

within the Colorado River Basin (CRB). This report is a companion report to *Comparison of USGS and Bureau of Reclamation Water-Use Reporting in the Colorado River Basin*. These reports will be released at the same time. Three key takeaways from the report: 1) Total water use, excluding interbasin transfers of water out of the CRB, averaged about 17 million acre-feet from 1985 to 2010, peaking in 2000 at 17.76 million acre-feet, and was at the lowest level of 16.43 million acre-feet in 1990. 2) Irrigation of crops was the predominant offstream use of water, averaging 85 percent of total use over the 25-year timespan; much more surface water was used than groundwater. 3) Population in the CRB increased from about 4.6 million people to over 9.4 million people between 1985 and 2010, and most of the people were in the lower CRB. By far, most of the public-supply withdrawals occurred in the lower CRB, and surface-water was the predominant source of water. (5/10/2018)

On June 19, the USGS will release a new Circular entitled “Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2015.” This report documents the national compilation of water use data issued by the USGS once every 5 years for the entire U.S. The report will present state-level water use data for the year 2015 and discuss long-term trends in water use. An accompanying data release of county-level data will be made available concurrently with the Circular. Also, a data visualization for the Circular and county-level data is being created. All three products will be released concurrently, and a news release is planned. (3/14/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

2017 Senate appropriations report language called for a document on “the extent the Survey has surveyed the U.S. domestic mineral base” and “what commodities the Survey determines to be strategic or critical minerals”. The timeline for delivery of the report was subsequently adjusted so that USGS could align the document with the Secretary’s plan for subsurface mapping (delivered on April 19 under Secretarial Order 3359) and cite the Department’s final list of critical minerals (noticed on May 18). In early June, USGS will provide a draft response for review and approval. (05/22/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

ASWS Travel: AS/WS Tim Petty is likely to travel to the Columbia River Basin during the week of June 25-29, to participate in Columbia River Treaty discussions and potential site visits.

### **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

## **NEW ITEMS**

The week of June 18, Alan Mikkelsen will be in the Klamath Basin. He will meet with stakeholders to discuss the draft Principles he gave during his May visit. Media interest is expected. (5/25/2018)

On June 18, Reclamation’s Albuquerque Area Office will issue a press release announcing Reclamation and Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA) finalized

an agreement to lease 10,000 acre-feet of water to supplement flows in the Middle Rio Grande (New Mexico) this summer. Under the agreement, Reclamation would pay \$1 million for the water that the ABCWUA has in storage from its San Juan-Chama Project allocation. This would allow Reclamation to keep the Albuquerque reach of the Middle Rio Grande wet longer into the summer. The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District is also a partner in the agreement. The three entities plan to make the announcement at a news conference on June 20 or 21 in Albuquerque. The drought in New Mexico has been in the national news recently and this would be a bright spot of cooperation to highlight. It also exhibits Reclamation's commitment to make all efforts to keep as much of the river wet as possible. (5/29/2018)

On July 19-20, Reclamation's Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum's Work Group will meet at the Wallace F. Bennet Federal Building in Salt Lake City, Utah. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss on-going and future salinity control activities with Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. (05/29/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

In June, The Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region, Yuma Area Office (YAO) intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to request proposals to fund projects for activities in support of its Endangered Species and Environmental Restoration programs in Federal FY 2018 (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018). The YAO periodically makes funding available for conducting activities for Threatened and Endangered species and their habitats under Section 7(a)1 of the Endangered Species Act under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Program (FWCAP). Reclamation has made \$110,000.00 of funding available for award for this FWCAP Financial Assistance FOA. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that FY 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Reclamation will limit total funding to generally not more than \$50,000 in Federal funding to each applicant. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Eligible applicants are state and local governments, non-profit organizations and institutions, public and private institutions and organizations, federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments, individuals, small businesses, for-profit organizations, and Native American organizations. (4/9/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement on the New Mexico Unit Project. The proposed project is part of the Central Arizona Project, authorized by the Colorado River Basin Project Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90-537, 43 U.S.C. Ch. 32, as amended by the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA, Pub. L. 108-451). Pursuant to the AWSA, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to contract with water users in New Mexico for water from the Gila River, its tributaries and underground water sources. Use of Gila River water under the AWSA is conditioned on satisfying various laws and agreements related to the use and exchange of Gila River water in New Mexico and Arizona. The NM Unit will divert Gila River water in New Mexico for this purpose. The AWSA provided

funding to construct the NM Unit or, to develop other alternatives in southwestern New Mexico to meet demand. Reclamation and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission are joint lead agencies for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other related environmental regulations regarding the proposed Project. Issuance of the NOI will initiate the formal public scoping process associated with NEPA compliance. The process for publishing the Federal Register Notice of Intent will follow the NEPA Document Clearance Process outlined in the Deputy Secretary's April 27, 2018, memorandum. (3/27/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the *Federal Register (FR)*, to be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. The FR notice requests public comments on the Department's proposed decision to re-allocate Central Arizona Project non-Indian agricultural priority (CAP NIA) water consistent with a recommendation made to the Secretary by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) in January 2014. This process is in accordance with Section 104 of the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act (Public Law 108-451), which directed the Secretary to allocate to the ADWR up to 96,295 acre-feet of CAP NIA priority water; this water is to be held by ADWR under contract in trust for further allocation, until a reallocation recommendation is submitted by ADWR to the Secretary. In 2012, ADWR began the reallocation recommendation process, and on January 16, 2014, ADWR submitted its recommendation to the Secretary. As explained in the proposed FR notice, the Secretary proposes to make 46,629 acre-feet of the NIA Priority CAP water available under long-term contracts in the amounts and to the municipal and industrial entities identified in ADWR's recommendation. Reallocation of CAP NIA priority water would address the imbalance of water supply and demand in central Arizona by providing renewable water supplies to those entities with a projected demand/supply imbalance based on ADWR's evaluation criteria. (4/23/2018)

In June, Reclamation proposes to publish a notice in the Federal Register to begin charging fees at Lake Berryessa in Napa County, California. The fees will be used to upgrade facilities and pay for costs associated with recreation. Reclamation will ensure visitors are aware of the proposed plan by holding public scoping meetings, issuing press releases, posting it on the Lake Berryessa website at [www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa/index.html), and posting announcements at day-use areas. During public scoping meetings and the public comment period, Reclamation will seek input from the public regarding the possible use of funds collected. Public scoping meetings and public outreach will ensure the public is aware of all proposed fees and passes available to them. (2/26/2018)

In late June, Reclamation, Klamath Irrigation District, R&G Excavating, Klamath County, and the Klamath Basin irrigation community (Oregon) will hold an event to celebrate the completion of the new C Siphon which will convey irrigation water across the Lost River slough and Wildcat Canyon. The event will celebrate the success of the two-year construction project and a decades-long effort from procuring funding to construction. Media interest is expected. (4/23/2018)

On July 17, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District and Reclamation will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Ruedi Reservoir (Colorado). It will be preceded by a tour of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project West Slope facilities July 16. (5/21/2018)

U.S. Geological Survey

## ONGOING ITEMS

On June 15, the USGS will announce a new report that evaluates the condition of resources in Olympic National Park. The 400-page Natural Resource Condition Assessment, or NRCA, addresses the current status and trends of 12 resources that Olympic National Park managers identified as species or communities of concern. The report was produced in cooperation with the National Park Service and a local news release is planned. (4/17/2018)

In early June, USGS and NOAA will release the 2018 forecast for the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico. The hypoxic zone is an area of low to no oxygen that can kill fish and other marine life. The Gulf's hypoxic (low oxygen) and anoxic (oxygen-free) zones are caused by excess nutrient pollution, primarily from human activities such as agriculture and wastewater. The excess nutrients stimulate an overgrowth of algae, which then sinks and decomposes in the water. The resulting low oxygen levels are insufficient to support most marine life and habitats in near-bottom waters, threatening the Gulf's fisheries. A news release is planned. (5/14/2018)

In June, the USGS will announce a new Scientific Investigation Report that provides inundation maps and flood details following Hurricane Harvey for areas of eastern and coastal Texas. Hurricane Harvey was the most significant rainfall event in US history, according to an upcoming USGS report. High water mark data, along with flood flow information from USGS streamgages, were used to create 19 inundation maps documenting the areal extent and depth of the flooding. In the immediate aftermath of Harvey, the USGS and FEMA initiated a cooperative study to evaluate the magnitude of flooding, determine the probability of occurrence and map the extent of the flood in Texas. USGS field crews collected 2,123 high-water marks in across southeast Texas. A statewide news release is planned for Texas and the report will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. (4/26/2018)

In June, the USGS will announce a forthcoming energy resource assessment of the Eagle Ford Shale in Texas. The Eagle Ford Shale extends from the Mexico-U.S. border in southern Texas north through San Antonio towards Waco. The Eagle Ford has been an active oil and gas producing region for the past decade. USGS previously assessed the Eagle Ford in 2011. Using a geology-based assessment methodology, the USGS will assess estimates of undiscovered, technically recoverable resources of oil and natural gas. A news release is planned, and USGS expects to offer Congressional briefings. (5/15/2018)

In June, the USGS will release a new Circular entitled "Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2015." This report documents the national compilation of water use data issued by the USGS once every 5 years for the entire U.S. The report will present state-level water use data for the year 2015 and discuss long-term trends in water use. An accompanying data release of county-level data will be made available concurrently with the Circular. Also, a data visualization for the Circular and county-level data is being created. All three products will be released concurrently, and a news release is planned. (3/14/2018)

In June, the USGS will be highlighting remote sensing efforts underway. The first part will focus on a new research effort to survey water resources in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain from the air.



Beginning in late February, the USGS began the first in a series of flights in Greenwood, Mississippi, to acquire large-scale airborne geophysical data in support of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain (MAP) Regional Water Availability Study, part of a groundwater availability study in the region. The USGS is working in partnership with multiple state agencies. The second is a UAS project in Colorado where the USGS will be testing a variety of noncontact sensors mounted on small, unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) to measure river metrics including velocity, top width, area, and discharge and compare these data to ground-based conventional streamgaging methods. A top story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

In June and over the summer, the USGS will be releasing several publications and data products enhancing understanding of “Groundwater Availability of the Williston Basin, United States and Canada”. A multi-year regional assessment of groundwater availability in the Williston Basin was started in 2011 under the USGS’s Water Availability and Use Science Program, as part of its ongoing regional assessments of groundwater availability of the principal aquifers of the Nation. The goals of this national assessment are to document effects of human activities on water levels and groundwater storage, to explore effects of climate variability on the regional water budget, and to provide consistent and integrated information that is useful to those who use and manage the groundwater resource. The first product will be a *SIR Construction and Calibration of a Groundwater-Flow Model to Assess Groundwater Availability in the Uppermost Principal Aquifer Systems of the Williston Basin, United States and Canada*. In the next several months, the USGS will also release the following: 1) Professional Paper *Groundwater Availability of the Williston Basin, United States and Canada*; 2) Fact Sheet *Williston Basin Groundwater Availability, United States and Canada*; and 3) Data release *Water Use for Hydraulic Fracturing Treatments in and near the Williston Basin, United States, 2000-2015*. (5/10/2018)

In June, the USGS will announce an upcoming article that finds the elevation at which clouds begin to form is the dominant factor in the extinction risk for the federally endangered Shenandoah salamander. The cloud base height is a function of temperature and relative humidity. Regional forecasts suggest increased warming in these high-elevation habitats, so increases in cloud base heights are expected to continue into the future. This could increase the extinction risk for the Shenandoah salamander. The paper will be published in *Ecology and Evolution* and a local news release is planned. (5/14/2018)

At the end of June, the USGS will highlight a new USGS Circular entitled “A snapshot of women of the U.S. Geological Survey in STEM and related careers.” Women’s participation rate in the sciences is still lower than men’s and relatively few women reach top scientific leadership roles. The USGS needs specialists from a growing variety of science and related fields to remain a science leader. Given that girls and women are underrepresented, it is logical to look to them to fulfill society’s growing need and demand for science. With the online release of this circular, USGS will embark on a long-term campaign to encourage and inspire students, particularly girls and young women from middle school through early career, to consider Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) careers, and to reach experienced female professionals for science and leadership positions in USGS. This will include an internal USGS and DOI communications component to honor, inspire, and celebrate women within the USGS. The circular will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. Printed copies will be available in June. A social media campaign in planned. (4/26/2018)

In June/July, USGS will highlight research that examined differential changes in the onset of spring across U.S. National Wildlife Refuges and North American migratory bird flyways. The study used indices of spring onset, the First Leaf Index and the First Bloom Index, as proxies of habitat change for the period 1901 to 2012 at three spatial scales: the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System; the four major bird migratory flyways in North America; and the seasonal ranges (i.e., breeding and non-breeding grounds) of two migratory bird species, Bluewinged Warbler and Whooping Crane. The results provide insight into how differential shifts in the phenology of disparate but linked habitats could inform local- to landscape-scale management strategies for the conservation of migratory bird populations. A Top Story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

In June/July, Penn State University and the USGS will announce a new paper that assesses the climate sensitivity of amphibian communities in the U.S. and Canada. For this study an international team of scientists quantified climate sensitivity and assessed how climate sensitivity varies regionally for 81 species of amphibians across the United States and Canada. Partners for this study include Pennsylvania State University, University of Colorado, University of Washington, Institute of Evolutionary Biology and Environmental Studies (Switzerland), McGill University (Canada), University of Connecticut, Colorado State University, Virginia Tech, Parks Canada, University of Kentucky, National Parks Service, U.S. Forest Service, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains and Pepperdine University. The paper will be published in *Nature Communications* and a joint news release is planned. (5/15/2018)

In June or July USGS scientists will coordinate with the Los Angeles Zoo and others to release captive-bred, endangered mountain yellow-legged frogs in southern California. This species faces multiple threats, including habitat loss, drought, and chytrid fungus. The Los Angeles Zoo and the city of Los Angeles are both planning press surrounding the frogs' release (including a potential press release, and possible attendance by the mayor of Los Angeles). The *Los Angeles Times* is planning to publish an article about the collaborative project. (05/16/18)

## **Awareness**

### **ONGOING ITEM**

The CUPCA Office and the Central Utah Water Conservancy District are considering conveyance and storage of non-project water in the Starvation Collection System, Central Utah Project. Up to 14,000 acre-feet of water could be stored on a space-available basis in the system. Scoping will be conducted as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance. Upon completion of NEPA, contracts under the authority of the Warren Act could be executed with local water organizations for conveyance and storage. This week the District issued a pre-scoping newsletter requesting input on the topic by June 29, 2018. (5/21/18)

## **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

## **NEW ITEMS**

The April 2018 24-Month Study established that Lake Powell operations shifted to “balancing releases” for the remainder of water year 2018. Under balancing, the contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead will be balanced by the end of the water year, but not more than 9.0 million acre-feet (maf) and not less than 8.23 maf shall be released from Lake Powell. Based on the most probable inflow forecast, the May 24-Month Study projects a balancing release of 9.0 maf in water year 2018; the actual release in water year 2018, however, will depend on hydrology in the remainder of water year and will range from 8.23 to 9.0 maf. The projected release from Lake Powell in water year 2018 will be updated each month throughout the remainder of the water year. Based on the current inflow forecast and projected releases, the May 24-Month Study projects Lake Powell elevation will end water year 2018 near 3,598 feet, with approximately 11.6 maf in storage (48 percent of capacity). Currently, Lake Powell is 52 percent full, with a live storage content of 12.8 maf. (5/29/2018)

Around May 30, Reclamation’s Albuquerque Area Office plans to issue a news release in Elephant Butte in an effort to correct some incorrect information that has been circulating locally on the Elephant Butte Historic Damsite Title Transfer or Disposal process. Rep. Steve Pearce, R. N.M., is preparing to propose legislation to transfer title of the area that is no longer needed by Reclamation to the City of Elephant Butte, New Mexico. Reclamation had previously initiated a disposal process for the land with the General Services Administration prior to the potential title transfer. The disposal process will move forward slowly and title transfer would ultimately override the disposal process. Recent reports in the local community claim the land must be saved by title transfer or Reclamation will destroy all of the historic buildings on site and that Reclamation must put in \$10 million in improvements before title transfer. Both are incorrect and should be addressed. The press release will explain the process and explain that the buildings are registered as historic and Reclamation and the next owner must protect them. It will also explain that the land is being transferred as-is and that Reclamation will not be making big investments before transfer. (05/29/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., is again preparing to propose legislation that would transfer title to parts of the Middle Rio Grande Project to the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD). The legislation would rely heavily on a Memorandum of Understanding between Reclamation and MRGCD which has been under development for several months. MRGCD has completed its repayment to Reclamation under the 1951 repayment contract, but Reclamation has not yet received congressional authorization to transfer title to the district. Reclamation would generally support such a transfer as long as certain conditions are met, including full consultation and agreement by the six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos. Preliminary discussions have considered proposing this title transfer bill along with legislation that is being drafted by Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., that would transfer the historic dam site area at Elephant Butte, New Mexico to the City of Elephant Butte. (05/21/2018)

Reclamation Great Plains Region continues to support the Department of Justice in settlement talks with Manitoba regarding the Northwest Area Water Supply (North Dakota). On May 7, 2018, the United States Court of Appeals issued an order extending the 90-day stay in this case

by another 30 days. This allows continued progress in the settlement discussions. Briefs in this case are now scheduled to begin in June and conclude in September 2018. (5/15/2018)

Later this summer, Reclamation will release the selected projects under the Drought Resiliency Project funding opportunity announcement. Through drought resiliency projects Reclamation will provide funding for projects that will help communities prepare for and respond to drought. (4/9/2018)

### U.S. Geological Survey

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On June 11-13, USGS will present new science at the National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center Symposium in Annapolis, MD. USGS is part of a team of scientists examining the driving forces behind forest mortality during California's historic drought. The researchers used two datasets from a lower mixed conifer forest in the Sierra Nevada to investigate the types of trees that died during the drought, the direct causes of their deaths, and the influence that prior stress had on risk of tree mortality. Results indicate that bark beetles were the primary force driving tree mortality during the drought, and that they did select specific tree species. Prior stress influenced risk of mortality for some subsets of trees but not others. These findings can inform forest management in a future with more severe and frequent droughts. (05/22/18)

On Sunday afternoon, May 27, 2018, at least 8 to 10 inches of precipitation fell over Ellicott City, Catonsville, and surrounding vicinities in central Maryland. The precipitation caused significant flooding and property damage in the affected area. Extensive, severe property and public infrastructure damage has been sustained there. Property damage and inundation was also experienced in the vicinity of Catonsville. The runoff from the precipitation has occurred primarily in the Patapsco River and Patuxent River watersheds. One gage on the mainstem of the Patapsco River (7 years of data) experienced a peak of record. Two gages in the Dead Run sub-watershed of the Patapsco River basin were damaged and made inoperable. USGS personnel are deployed to identify high-water marks today at a number of USGS gages in the area. The deployment includes 4 crews, totaling 10 staff. One of the four crews will also be collecting sediment samples on the mainstem Patapsco River. USGS is awaiting permission to access the Ellicott City area to identify high-water marks along the three major tributaries draining through the historic district that sustained heavy flood damage. (05/29/18)

On May 23rd, 2018 the Operational Land Imager (OLI) sensor on board Landsat 8 was able to successfully acquire night-time imagery that accurately shows the flow of lava to the east of the Leilani Estates. Most collections of imagery occur during daylight hours to support scientific analyses of data. Utilizing this capability for unique situations, such as this, provides the scientists and disaster response team additional data needed to make informed decisions. This night-time collection and other Kilauea data can be viewed on the Hazards Data Distribution System at <http://hddsexplorer.gov> (May 30, 2018)

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

The USGS Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (HVO) reports that moderate-level eruption of lava continues from multiple points along the northeast end of the active fissure system in the lower Puna area. On the morning of May 22, the margin of a lava flow sourced from fissures 5 and 13 was 180 meters from well pad KS14 at the Puna Geothermal Ventures (PGV) facility. By noon the flow had stopped. Fissures 6 through 22 are erupting lava fountains. The lava fountain from fissure 22 continues to feed a channelized flow that reaches the coast just north of MacKenzie State Park. Fissure 6 is feeding a flow to the south that is roughly paralleling the flow from fissure 22, but has not yet reached the coast. As lava flows enter the ocean, a different noxious hazard referred to as a laze plume (from lava and haze) is generated from the flash vaporization of seawater producing a plume of hydrochloric acid gas, steam and volcanic glass particles. Exposure to a laze plume leads to stinging on the skin, irritation of the eyes, nose and throat and difficulty breathing. Trade winds are currently blowing the laze plumes to the southwest. Fountaining of lava at fissures 5 and 23 has fed flows in the eastern part of Leilani Estates. Sulfur dioxide gas emissions have tripled as a result of voluminous eruptions from fissure 20, and concentrations are likely elevated to higher levels throughout the area downwind of the fissure vents. At Kīlauea's summit multiple small eruptions of ash occurred on May 22nd, none ejecting ash higher than 10,000 ft. above sea level. As of late afternoon of May 22, HVO web cameras recorded a robust plume of gas and steam billowing out of the Overlook Crater vent and drifting generally southwest. At present, HVO is serving as an unattended communications hub that has power and continues to provide access to critical monitoring data streams. HVO staff are working from a COOP site at the University of Hawaii Hilo campus with a secure connection to DOI.net and are continuing to monitor all activity utilizing data from seismometers, tiltmeters, GPS and other instruments, remote sensing from satellites and field observations (5/23/18).

During the ongoing eruption at Kīlauea Volcano, Interior Office of Aviation Services (OAS) and the USGS UAS Project Office maintain a presence with deployed equipment and trained personnel support remote sensing data acquisition for continued monitoring on Hawaii. Extended UAS operations continue, in accordance with established authorizations from the Federal Aviation Administration, DOI agencies, and the local emergency operations organizations. UAS payloads have been adapted/reconfigured as required to provide periodic assistance to local emergency managers, including investigation of lava-surrounded communities for potentially-stranded people and delivery of live video feeds of lava flow conditions/paths to the EOC in support of emergency evacuation efforts; this is in addition to conducting ongoing monitoring of lava movement toward the Puna Geothermal Venture Hawaiian Electric Plant and the volcano crater for scientific measurements and modeling. Monitoring volcanic activity using thermal video imagery and gas sensors and ground mapping of the volcanic fissures are the highest geospatial data priorities and are likely to be so for the coming weeks. All collected data, approved by government and emergency managers for release, will be organized, archived and distributed through the Hazards Data Distribution System available online ([hddexplorer.usgs.gov](http://hddexplorer.usgs.gov).) (05/23/2018)[UPDATE?] During the ongoing eruption at Kīlauea Volcano, Interior Office of Aviation Services (OAS) and the USGS UAS Project Office deployed equipment and trained personnel support remote sensing data acquisition for continued monitoring on Hawaii. Operations are expected to continue for next few weeks. Proper authorizations from the Federal Aviation Administration, DOI agencies, and the local emergency operations organizations have been established for extended period UAS operations. Urgent assistance was provided to local county and fire emergency managers to monitor lava movement

toward the Puna Geothermal Venture Hawaiian Electric Plant and the volcano crater for scientific measurements and modeling. Monitoring volcanic activity using thermal video imagery and gas sensors and ground mapping of the volcanic fissures are the highest geospatial data priorities and are likely to be so for the coming weeks. All collected data, approved by government and emergency managers for release, will be organized, archived and distributed through the Hazards Data Distribution System available online ([hddsexplorer.usgs.gov](http://hddsexplorer.usgs.gov)) (05/23/2018)

Flooding has begun to recede on many of the rivers in the Upper Columbia Basin in northeast Washington due to snowmelt from a above normal snowpack. Some of the rivers that we have been watching closely, the Similkameen, Okanagan, and the Kettle Rivers in northeastern Washington have all peaked and are falling but the Okanagan remains above flood stage. The Pend Oreille River, a tributary to the Columbia River that flows in Idaho, Washington and British Columbia has been rising all month and is currently above the moderate flood stage, flowing at 118,000 cfs as verified by a discharge measurement yesterday. It is forecasted to crest May 31 or June 1 at about 125,000 cfs. Other rivers on the east side of the Washington Cascade Mountains are also receding from peak flows earlier in the month. Crews will be out next week getting discharge measurements on the Pend Oreille and the Columbia River at International Border. Currently all the gages are operating with no reported loss of data. (5/10/2018)

Flooding in the Clark Fork basin in Western Montana is subsiding but flooding and the risk of flooding is intensifying in several other areas. Big Hole, Jefferson, Gallatin, and Missouri (Toston) all currently at NWS "minor" flood stage, with Three Forks and Toston forecasted to crest at "moderate" flood stages later this week and into the weekend. NWS flood stages range from minor to major as observed at upper- and middle-Musselshell with secondary crests forecast through the week as streamflows continue a recession trend. Most streamgages in Upper Yellowstone from Livingston downstream currently at NWS minor to moderate flood stages. Stillwater and Clarks Fork forecasted record crests early this week, with Yellowstone Billings near record crest forecasted. In Wind area, most mainstem streamgages forecasted to crest at NWS minor to moderate flood stages early this week. Forecasted crests from rainfall will reach NWS minor flood stages early this week at some streamgages in NE Wyoming and SE Montana (e.g. Clear Cr Buffalo and Tongue Birney Day School). Clark Fork and Bitterroot continue slow recession but remain above NWS flood stages. (5/10/2018)

In June, the USGS plans to distribute a public notice to news outlets in Ellsworth and New Richmond, Wisconsin, and Red Wing, Minnesota, announcing a public open comment period for proposed USGS field trials of a white-nose syndrome vaccine in the area. The field trials, part of an Environmental Assessment that is being developed by the USGS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, will evaluate methods of vaccine delivery and their effectiveness in reducing or preventing white-nose syndrome (WNS) in wild bats under field conditions. The comment period will be open for 30 days following approval of the Public Notice. The Public Notice will be submitted to the outlets by a USGS Environmental Manager and is not meant to be a formal news release. (3/23/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

During the week of June 4, USGS Regional Directors from the Pacific, Northwest and Southwest Regions will meet in Denver, Colo. with Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Interior, Alan Mikkelsen, to discuss current USGS science in the west. Topics will likely include natural hazards, water, ecosystems, and energy and minerals.

In late June, a delegation of 180 officials from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are invited to meet at the University of Oklahoma, the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) host university, during the 2018 Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council Ministerial. The South Central CASC is planning to highlight their science work during the officials' visit and will be part of the University of Oklahoma's discussions for future plans to collaborate with these officials and stakeholders. The CEC Council Chairmanship and Ministerial rotates between the US, Mexico, and Canada each year, and Administrator Scott Pruitt (current chair) selected Oklahoma City as the location for the 2018 meeting. The theme for this year's Council Ministerial is "Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth". (4/24/2018)

Beginning August 6, the USGS will conduct the Mid-Atlantic Resource Imaging Experiment (MATRIX) seismic project on Atlantic margin in partnership with BOEM and the U.S. Department of Energy. The goal of the project is to image distribution of gas hydrate and shallow gas on Atlantic margin between Hudson Canyon and Cape Hatteras across areas considered highly prospective for gas hydrates. Seismic data will be collected over a period of 2.5 to 3 weeks. An Incidental Harassment Authorization Application was submitted to NMFS in March, initial comments have been received, and the Federal Register Notice is anticipated by the end of May. The Draft Environmental Assessment and request for Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act was also submitted to NMFS in March. The draft EA is posted on the USGS Coastal/Marine Hazards & Resources Program's environmental compliance website and has closed for comment. (4/6/2018)

Executive Order 13817/Secretarial Order 3359 milestones: The USGS supported the Department in preparing a "Final List of Critical Minerals (2018)", noticed in the Federal Register on May 18, 2018. Other current activities: On April 19, 2018, the USGS delivered to the Secretary a draft plan to better assess the Nation's subsurface mineral potential through new collection of geophysical, geologic, and topographic data. Beginning in May, the USGS is working with other Federal agencies and external partners on revisions as required to inform the government-wide strategy to be published by the Department of Commerce in August 2018. Interagency drafting teams are working on first drafts of the strategy's pieces as required by the Executive Order. Two of these strategy pieces require USGS technical input to interagency drafting teams on: (1) geologic composition of above-ground sources of critical minerals available for recycling, reprocessing, and substituting alternative materials; (2) existing foreign trade dependencies for critical minerals. (2/9/2018)

Secretarial Order 3352 milestones: The reprocessing of vintage 2-D seismic data acquired in the mid-1980s over the Section 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is progressing, with expected delivery in the summer of 2018. A resource assessment of the Section 1002 area will be deferred pending the acquisition of 3-D seismic data by industry. In the interim, the USGS will shift its efforts on resource assessments on Alaska's North Slope to accelerate the evaluation of the Central North Slope (CNS) lands situated between ANWR and

the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The expected completion date of the CNS assessment is December 2019; an assessment covering NPR-A was released in December 2017. Field work to support the broader North Slope effort is scheduled for this summer, with logistical planning now underway. (5/2/2018)

The USGS continues progress toward implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) for the energy geochemistry laboratories. External audits are complete and USGS is preparing a formal report to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) that certifies that a functional QMS is fully implemented. The target date to complete the package internally is May 18, after which results will be reviewed with USGS management and submitted to DOI for further review. Any changes will be reviewed again, with final submission to the OIG scheduled for late June. (5/2/2018)

The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NAS) has nearly completed a strategic review of the USGS Energy Resources Program. The study is to evaluate the long term strategic priorities of the program and suggest alternatives or changes for the program to consider. A committee was assembled by the NAS and has now met three times, twice with program participation and once in closed session. A rough draft of the report is due in early July, with a final report due by August. (5/2/2018)

### **Upcoming USGS Publications**

During the week of May 29, a dataset, titled “Early Estimates of Herbaceous Annual Cover in the Sagebrush Ecosystem (May 1, 2018)”, will be made available via ScienceBase. The dataset provides an estimate of 2018 herbaceous annual percent cover for the Great Basin, the Snake River Plain, the state of Wyoming, and contiguous areas. Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) is the most common annual grass in the study area, but red brome (*Bromus rubens*), medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*), and ventenata (*Ventenata dubia*) are also present. These grasses contribute fine fuels that facilitate fire ignition and spread throughout sagebrush ecosystems, contributing to fires that remove sagebrush stands. (May 29, 2018)



# Conversation Contents

## Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/28

### Attachments:

/34. Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/28/1.1 Speaking Calendar.xlsx  
/34. Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/28/1.2 Speaking Engagement Form.docx

**"Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Nachmany, Eli" <eli\_nachmany@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 16:20:23 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** "Newell, Russell" <russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Speaking Calendar: Week of 5/28  
**Attachments:** Speaking Calendar.xlsx Speaking Engagement Form.docx

Team,

Attached, please find the latest version of the speaking calendar, updated for the week of 5/28.

The Speaking Engagement Form is attached on here as well; if an upcoming speaking engagement of yours is not on the calendar, please have an assistant in your hallway fill out the form and send it to Russ Newell and me, with Laura Rigas CC'd.

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Sincerely,

Eli Nachmany  
Speechwriter, Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 706-9285

| Date | Speaker            | Title                                  | Bureau/Agency                                     | Event/Organization  | Topic (if applicable)                      |
|------|--------------------|--|---|---|--|
| 5/30 | Rick May           | Senior National Advisor for Recreation | Office of the Secretary                           | Partners Outdoors 2018  | Recreation and outdoors                    |
| 5/30 | Vincent DeVito     | Counselor for Energy Policy            | Office of the Secretary                           | 2018 Energy Forums by Kansas Chamber of Commerce                | The Future of U.S. Energy Policy           |
| 5/31 | John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary   | Indian Affairs                                    | Consultation Part 151 Regulations                               |  |
| 5/31 | Joe Balash         | Assistant Secretary                    | Land and Minerals Management                      | Alaska Oil and Gas Association (AOGA) Conference                |  |
| 5/31 | David Bernhardt    | Deputy Secretary                       | Office of the Deputy Secretary                    | American Battlefield Trust 2018 Annual Conference               |  |
| 6/1  | Brenda Burman      | Commissioner                           | Bureau of Reclamation                             | Municipal Water District of Orange County                       |  |
| 6/3  | John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary   | Indian Affairs                                    | Listening Sessions during National Congress of American Indians | Joint session with Department of Education |
| 6/6  | Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director                        | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management                 | Offshore Operators Committee General Meeting                    |  |
| 6/7  | Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director                        | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management                 | 3rd Annual US Offshore Wind Conference                          |  |
| 6/7  | Joe Balash         | Assistant Secretary                    | Land and Minerals Management                      | Wyoming Mining Association                                      |  |
| 6/11 | Brenda Burman      | Commissioner                           | Bureau of Reclamation                             | All-Employee Meeting with Commissioner Burman                   |  |
| 6/21 | Scott Cameron      | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary   | Bureau of Reclamation                             | ONRR Building Rededication with the GSA Administrator           |  |
| 7/23 | Brenda Burman      | Commissioner                           | Policy, Management & Budget Bureau of Reclamation | Conference of Western Attorneys General                         |  |

| Location                  | OCO Remarks? | Press  | Audience  | Point of Contact |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------|---|------------------|
| Washington, DC            | Yes          | Closed | Industry  |                  |
| Wichita & Garden City, KS |              | ?      | Kansas Chamber of Commerce  |                  |
| Rapid City, SD            |              | ?      | Tribal  |                  |
| Anchorage, AK             |              | Open   | Representatives of federal, state, local government, and the oil and gas industry |                  |
| Newport News, VA          |              | Open   | American Battlefield Trust board members, stakeholders, and staff                 |                  |
| Anaheim, CA               |              | Open   | Water district managers   |                  |
| Kansas City, MO           |              | ?      | Tribal  |                  |
| Austin, TX                |              | Closed | Oil and gas industry  |                  |
| Boston, MA                |              | Open   | Industry, academia, government  |                  |
| Jackson, WY               |              | Open   | Mining industry leaders from WY   |                  |
| Boise, ID                 |              | Closed | Regional and Snake River Area Office employees                                    |                  |
| Denver, CO                |              | Closed | Federal   |                  |
| Santa Ana Pueblo, NM      |              | Closed | Western Attorneys General and their staff   |                  |

| Date  | Speaker          | Title                      | Bureau/Agency   | Event/Organization   | Topic (if applicable)   | Location         |
|-------|------------------|----------------------------|---|--|---|------------------|
| 10/16 | Todd Willens     | Asst. Deputy Secretary     | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | American Recreation Coalition luncheon                         | Outdoor recreation  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/16 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Indian Affairs  | National Congress of American Indians                          | Upholding trust   | Milwaukee, WI    |
| 10/17 | Tim Williams     | Deputy Director            | Office of Intergovernment and External Affairs                  | Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum | responsibilities  |                  |
| 10/17 | Casey Hammond    | DAS                        | Land and Minerals Management                                    | Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum | Secretary's Top 10 priorities   | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/17 | Aurelia Skipwith | DAS                        | Fish, Wildlife & Parks  | Independent Petroleum Association of America Regulators' Forum | Bureau of Land Management issues  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/17 | Kate MacGregor   | Acting Asst. Secretary     | Land and Minerals Management                                    | National Mining Association                                    | Conservation  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/17 | Austin Ewell     | DAS                        | Water and Science   | Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway completion ceremony              | Secretary's priorities for hardrock mining and coal                                   | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/19 | David Bernhardt  | Deputy Secretary           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | National Congress of American Indians                          |   | Folsom, CA       |
| 10/19 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Indian Affairs  | Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council                          | Sovereignty   | Milwaukee, WI    |
| 10/20 | Daniel Jorjani   | Principal Deputy Solicitor | Office of the Solicitor   | CA State Bar Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite          | Upholding trust responsibilities  | Polson, MT       |
| 10/21 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Indian Affairs  | Alaska Federation Natives & Consultation                       | Regulatory reform   | Fish Camp, CA    |
| 10/24 | Scott Angelle    | Director                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exhibition Keynote Luncheon           | Upholding trust responsibilities and Licensed Indian Traders regulations consultation | Anchorage, AK    |
| 10/24 | Todd Willens     | Asst. Deputy Secretary     | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | NM Assn of Conservation Districts                              | Secure and reliable energy production from the Outer Continental Shelf                | Lafayette, LA    |
| 10/26 | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | DOI-Self Governance Advisory Quarterly Meeting                 | Public access, forest management, sage grouse   | Taos, NM         |
| 10/27 | Scott Angelle    | Director                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | Louisiana Chemical Association                                 | Reorganization  | Washington, D.C. |
| 10/31 | Scott Cameron    | PDAS                       | Policy, Management & Budget                                     | ACT-IAC 2017 Executive Leadership Conference                   | Energy dominance  | New Orleans, LA  |
| 11/1  | John Tahsuda     | PDAS                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Native American Heritage Month Opening Ceremony                | Management efficiency and effectiveness   | Williamsburg, VA |
|       |                  |                            |   |  |   | Washington, D.C. |

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| 11/1 Greg Sheehan         | Principal Deputy Director                  | US Fish and Wildlife Service                                    | Organization of American States 2017  |  |                    |
| 11/2 Kate MacGregor       | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Land and Minerals Management                                    | Conservation Champion Award   | Award presentation   | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/3 John Tahsuda         | PDAS                                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Women in Energy Infrastructure  |  | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/7 John Tahsuda         | PDAS                                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference - DC  | Land into trust, tribal courts                               | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/8 Scott Angelle        | Director                                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | NACA 2017-Federal Contracting Policy & Advocacy Conference                                    | Economic development for Native communities                  | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/8 John Tahsuda         | PDAS                                       | Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs/Bureau of Indian Affairs | Deepwater Operations Conference   |  | Galveston, TX      |
| 11/8 Steve Wackowski      | Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska | Office of the Secretary   | Tribal/Interior Budget Council  |  | Washington, D.C.   |
| 11/9 Marshall Critchfield | Advisor                                    | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks   | Alaska Miners Association Convention  | Federal policy regarding hard rock resources on federal land | Anchorage, AK      |
| 11/9 Vincent DeVito       | Energy Policy Counselor                    | Office of the Secretary   | Easton Waterfowl Festival Premiere Night  | Introducing winner of the duck stamp competition             | Easton, MD         |
| 11/9 Scott Angelle        | Director                                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement                  | Heartland Institute America First Energy Conference   | American Energy Dominance                                    | Houston, TX        |
| 11/14 Andrea Travnicek    | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Water and Science   | International Assn. of Drilling Contractors   |  | Austin, TX         |
| 11/14 Kathy Benedetto     | Senior Advisor                             | Bureau of Land Management                                       | 20th William T. Pecora Memorial Remote Sensing Symposium                                      | Application of Earth Observing Data                          | Sioux Falls, SD    |
| 11/14 David Bernhardt     | Deputy Secretary                           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                                  | Idaho Cattle Association  |  | Sun Valley, ID     |
| 11/16 Kate MacGregor      | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Land and Minerals Management                                    | Western Caucus Luncheon   | Western issues   | Washington, DC     |
| 11/16 John Tahsuda        | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Indian Affairs  | Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club Presentation   |  | Grand Junction, CO |
| 11/17 Vincent DeVito      | Energy Policy Counselor                    | Office of the Secretary   | "Mvskoke Etlwv: The Muscogee People"  | Meet and greet   | Washington, DC     |
| 11/21 Steve Wackowski     | Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska | Office of the Secretary   | TBD: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Gas Infrastructure Exports Initiative                     | U.S. LNG   | Washington, DC     |
| 11/28 Scott Cameron       | PDAS                                       | Policy, Management & Budget                                     | Commonwealth North Board of Directors meeting   | DOI in Alaska  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 11/28 John Tahsuda        | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Indian Affairs  | Western Weed Coordinating Committee meeting   | Invasive species management                                  | Las Vegas, NV      |
| 11/29 Alan Mikkelsen      | Deputy Commissioner                        | Bureau of Reclamation   | 2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs Alaska Providers Conference                                     |  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 11/30 John Tahsuda        | Acting Asst. Secretary                     | Indian Affairs  | Oregon Water Resources Congress Annual Conference   |  | Hood River, OR     |
|                           |  |   | Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls |  | Ottawa, Canada     |

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| 11/30 Aurelia Skipwith    | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                          | Environmental Law & Policy Conference                                 | Endangered Species Act  | Washington, DC  |
| 11/30 Alan Mikkelsen      | Deputy Commissioner     | Bureau of Reclamation                            | Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition | Panel discussion  | Anaheim, CA     |
| 11/30 Austin Ewell        | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Water and Science                                | Association of California Water Agencies Fall Conference & Exhibition | Panel discussion  | Anaheim, CA     |
| 12/4 Kathy Benedetto      | Senior Advisor          | Bureau of Land Management                        | American Exploration and Mining Association                           | Reducing barriers to mineral exploration and development  | Sparks/Reno, NV |
| 12/5 John Tahsuda         | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs                                   | National Indian Gaming Association                                    | Indian trader regulations and proposed land acquisition regulations   | Washington, DC  |
| 12/6 Kate MacGregor       | Acting Asst. Secretary  | Land and Minerals Management                     | Offshore Operators Committee General Mtg                              |   | New Orleans, LA |
| 12/6 Vincent DeVito       | Energy Policy Counselor | Office of the Secretary                          | Platts Energy Conference  |   | New York, NY    |
| 12/6 Casey Hammond        | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Land and Minerals Management                     | American Exploration and Mining Association                           | Sage-grouse, regulatory reform  | Reno, NV        |
| 12/6 Steve Wackowski      | Alaska Advisor          | Office of the Secretary                          | Civil Applications Committee, NCAC Reston                             | Volcanoes and landslide analysis  | Reston, VA      |
| 12/7 Tim Williams         | Deputy Director         | Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs | State Policy Network  |   | Washington, DC  |
| 12/7 Jason Funes          | Special Assistant       | Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs | ALEC: States & Nations Policy Summit                                  | Energy dominance  | Nashville, TN   |
| 12/7 Steve Wackowski      | Alaska Advisor          | Office of the Secretary                          | American Exploration and Mining Association                           | Alaska's mining industry  | Reno, NV        |
| 12/8 Casey Hammond        | Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Land and Minerals Management                     | Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable           | Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West | Washington, DC  |
| 12/8 Marshall Critchfield | Advisor                 | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                          | Western Caucus Foundation: Winter Western Policy Roundtable           | Federal regulatory and public policy issues related to natural resource issues and economic development in West | Washington, DC  |
| 12/11 Scott Angelle       | Director                | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement   | Bayou Industrial Group and South Central Industrial Association       | Offshore energy   | Gray, LA        |
| 12/12 Doug Domenech       | Assistant Secretary     | Insular Affairs                                  | Island Government Finance Officers (IGFOA) Conference                 |   | Maui, HI        |

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| 12/15 Brenda Burman  | Deputy Commissioner              | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Colorado River Water Users Association Annual Conference  |  | Las Vegas, NV      |
| 1/5 David Bernhardt  | Deputy Secretary                 | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Congressional Sports Foundation   |  | Dallas, TX         |
| 1/6 David Bernhardt  | Deputy Secretary                 | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Dallas Safari Club  |  | Dallas, TX         |
|                      |                                  |  | Heritage Foundation Overcriminalization Working Group   | MBTA M-Opinion   | Washington, DC     |
| 1/10 Gary Lawkowski  | Counselor                        | Office of the Solicitor                        | Archery Trade Association   |  | Indianapolis, IN   |
| 1/11 Rick May        | Senior National Advisor          | Office of the Secretary                        | Consultation Part 151 Regulations   |  | Sacramento, CA     |
| 1/16 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 |   |  |                    |
| 1/17 Brenda Burman   | Commissioner                     | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Mid Pacific Region Water Users Conference   | CA water issues  | Reno, NV           |
| 1/17 Gary Lawkowski  | Counselor                        | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Federalist Society  | Migratory Bird Treaty Act  | Washington, DC     |
| 1/18 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | Consultation Part 151 Regulations   |  | Prior Lake, MN     |
| 1/19 Greg Sheehan    | Principal Deputy Director        | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | Wild Sheep Foundation Convention  |  | Reno, NV           |
|                      |                                  |  | Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program Panel   |  |                    |
| 1/19 Steve Wackowski | Senior Advisor for Alaska        | Office of the Secretary                        | Texas Oil and Gas Assn. Legislative and Regulatory Planning Meeting                                       | Federal regulation of oil and gas  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 1/23 Scott Angelle   | Director                         | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement |   |  | New Orleans, LA    |
|                      | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary |  |   |  |                    |
| 1/24 Jason Larrabee  |                                  | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                        | Ecological Restoration Business Association Meet and Greet with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians | Infrastructure   | Washington, DC     |
| 1/25 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | Consultation Part 151 Regulations   |  | Portland, OR       |
| 1/25 John Tahsuda    | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | Colorado Water Congress Annual Convention   |  | Portland, OR       |
| 1/26 Alan Mikkelsen  | Deputy Commissioner              | Bureau of Reclamation                          |   |  | Denver, CO         |
|                      |                                  |  |   | Sage-grouse, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros                   |                    |
| 1/29 Casey Hammond   | Deputy Asst. Secretary           | Land and Minerals Management                   | Society for Range Management  |  | Sparks, NV         |
|                      |                                  |  |   | Secretary's position on tribal relations                                 |                    |
| 1/31 Steve Wackowski | Senior Advisor for Alaska        | Office of the Secretary                        | DOI Alaska Native relations training  |  | Anchorage, AK      |
| 2/1 Vincent DeVito   | Counselor for Energy Policy      | Office of the Secretary                        | 2018 Power and Energy Ski Conference  |  | Deer Valley, UT    |
|                      |                                  |  | Federal Delegation Meeting - House Committee on Natural Resources   |  |                    |
| 2/2 James Cason      | Associate Deputy Secretary       | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Close Up Foundation (USET)  | Panel with students  | Salt Lake City, UT |
| 2/5 John Tahsuda     | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 | United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)                                    |  | Washington, DC     |
| 2/6 John Tahsuda     | Acting Asst. Secretary           | Indian Affairs                                 |   |  | Washington, DC     |
|                      |                                  |  |   | Streamline and improve the listing and ruling process of at-risk species |                    |
| 2/6 Greg Sheehan     | Principal Deputy Director        | Fish and Wildlife Service                      | Forest Landowners Association Board of Directors Meeting  |  | Washington, DC     |

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| 2/8 John Tahsuda                              | Acting Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs   | Western Indian Gaming Conference   | Fee-to-trust under the Trump administration<br>Interior priorities and accomplishments | Valley Center, CA                |
| 2/8 Doug Domenech                             | Assistant Secretary   | Insular and International Affairs                        | Texas Public Policy Foundation<br>Western Caucus Foundation House Staff Policy   |  | Austin, TX                       |
| 2/9 Todd Willens<br>2/12 John Tahsuda         | Assistant Deputy Secretary<br>Acting Asst. Secretary                                    | Office of the Deputy Secretary<br>Indian Affairs         | Planning Retreat<br>State of Indian Nations  |  | Washington, DC<br>Washington, DC |
| 2/13 Dan Smith                                | Acting Director   | National Park Service                                    | FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails   | Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)        | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/13 Brian Steed                              | Deputy Director   | Bureau of Land Management                                | FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails   | Lasting legacy of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers Acts (50th year)        | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/13 Cally Younger<br>2/13 John Tahsuda       | Counselor<br>Acting Asst. Secretary   | Bureau of Land Management<br>Indian Affairs              | FindYourWay on America's Rivers and Trails<br>National Congress of American Indians<br>23rd Annual National Indian Women's | Protect the Great Lakes and Relationship to DOI<br>Departmental Budget                 | Washington, DC<br>Washington, DC |
| 2/13 John Tahsuda                             | Acting Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs   | "Supporting Each Other Honoring Lunch"   |  | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/14 Scott Cameron                            | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Policy, Management & Budget                              | Great Lakes Environmental Summit   |  | Washington, DC                   |
| 2/17 Aurelia Skipwith<br>2/19 Steve Wackowski | Deputy Asst. Secretary<br>Senior Advisor for Alaska<br>Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks<br>Office of the Secretary       | Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Birthday Celebration<br>Meet Alaska Conference and Tradeshow                               |  | Washington, DC<br>Anchorage, AK  |
| 2/20 John Tahsuda                             | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary  | Indian Affairs   | Consultation Part 151 Regulations<br>Native American Child Safety Act (NACSA)  |  | Phoenix, AZ                      |
| 2/21 John Tahsuda                             | Secretary   | Indian Affairs<br>Intergovernmental and External Affairs | Guidelines   |  | Albuquerque, NM                  |
| 2/22 Jason Funes                              | Special Assistant<br>Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary                                   |  | FreedomWorks   |  | Oxon Hill, MD                    |
| 2/22 John Tahsuda                             | Secretary   | Indian Affairs   | Consultation Part 151 Regulations<br>Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and   |  | Miami, FL                        |
| 2/22 Brenda Burman                            | Commissioner  | Bureau of Reclamation                                    | Conference   | Western water issues   | Reno, NV                         |



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| 2/22 Aurelia Skipwith     | Deputy Asst. Secretary                 | Fish, Wildlife, & Parks                        | South Dakota Chamber of Commerce  | Tourism through National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges   | Pierre, SD           |
| 2/22 Marshall Critchfield | Advisor                                | Insular and International Affairs              | Coral Reef Task Force   | Implementation of ISAC recommendations   | Washington, DC       |
| 2/28 Scott Cameron        | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | 2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting                                      |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/1 Steve Wackowski       | Advisor for Alaska                     | Office of the Secretary                        | Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference   |  | Anchorage, AK        |
| 3/1 John Tahsuda          | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Indian Affairs                                 | Indian Trust Asset Reform Act   | Implementation of ISAC recommendations<br>Regulators roundtable: Oil and gas industry governance     | Portland, OR         |
| 3/1 Scott Cameron         | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | 2018 Invasive Species Advisory Committee meeting                                      |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/5 Scott Angelle         | Director                               | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement | CERAWeek  |  | Houston, TX          |
| 3/5 Tim Petty             | Assistant Secretary                    | Water and Science                              | National Ground Water Association, Irrigation Association & Water Quality Association | What's next for Interior   | Washington, DC       |
| 3/6 Aurelia Skipwith      | Deputy Assistant Secretary             | Fish, Wildlife & Parks                         | American Sheep Industry Association   |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/7 Scott Cameron         | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | CXO Fellows Event (Chief Financial Officers Council)                                  |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/7 Todd Wynn             | Director                               | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | American Coal Council   | What's next for Interior   | Clearwater Beach, FL |
| 3/9 Brenda Burman         | Commissioner                           | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Western Caucus Foundation   | Proctor Creek Urban Waters projects in the Atlanta area  | Tempe, AZ            |
| 3/9 Ryan Nichols          | Advisor                                | Water and Science                              | Proctor Creek Celebration of Success  |  | Atlanta, GA          |
| 3/14 Joe Balash           | Assistant Secretary                    | Land and Minerals Management                   | Faegre Baker Daniels Energy & Environment Symposium                                   |  | Washington, DC       |
| 3/15 Tim Petty            | Assistant Secretary                    | Water and Science                              | Interstate Council on Water Policy  | Cross Boundary Implications for Pre-Border Prevention and Post-Border Mitigation of Invasive Species | Arlington, VA        |
| 3/15 Scott Cameron        | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary       | Policy, Management & Budget                    | Western Governors Association   |  | Denver, CO           |
| 3/15 John Tahsuda         | Acting Asst. Secretary                 | Indian Affairs                                 | Working Lands Consultation  |  | Mashantucket, CT     |
| 3/18 Brenda Burman        | Commissioner                           | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Part 151 Regulations  |  | Brazil               |
| 3/26 Rick May             | Senior National Adviser for Recreation | Office of the Secretary                        | World Water Forum Brasilia  | Recreation and fishing   | Crystal City, VA     |
|                           |  |  | American Sportfishing Association   |  |                      |

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| 3/28 Joe Balash         | Assistant Secretary                  | Land and Minerals Management                   | Scotia Howard Weil 47th Annual Energy Conference                             |  | New Orleans, LA       |
| 3/28 Scott Cameron      | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary     | Policy, Management & Budget                    | North American Wildlife and Resources Conference                             | Initiatives with invasive species                                | Norfolk, VA           |
| 3/28 John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary     | Indian Affairs                                 | Quarterly Self-Governance Consultation, Sharee Freeman                       |  | Washington, DC        |
| 3/29 Greg Sheehan       | Principal Deputy Director            | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference                     |  | Norfolk, VA           |
| 4/3 Walter Cruickshank  | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | Offshore Wind Finance Meeting  |  | New York, NY          |
| 4/4 Walter Cruickshank  | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum                                 |  | Princeton, NJ         |
| 4/4 Vincent DeVito      | Counselor for Energy Policy          | Office of the Secretary                        | Bakken Federal Executives Group  | DOI energy policy  | N/A (Conference Call) |
| 4/5 Greg Sheehan        | Principal Deputy Director            | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council                                | Promotion of sport fishing and boating to increase participation | Washington, DC        |
| 4/5 Tim Williams        | Deputy Director                      | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | Center for Growth and Opportunity  | Public land management   | Las Vegas, NV         |
| 4/6 John Tahsuda        | Principal Deputy Asst. Secretary     | Indian Affairs                                 | Federal Bar Association's 43rd Annual Indian Law Conference                  | Indian Child Welfare Act Panel                                   | Scottsdale, AZ        |
| 4/9 Brenda Burman       | Commissioner                         | Bureau of Reclamation                          | National Water Resources Association   |  | Washington, DC        |
| 4/9 TBD                 | TBD                                  | TBD  | National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Legislative Summit |  | Washington, DC        |
| 4/10 Jason Funes        | Special Assistant                    | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | "Tuesday Morning Group" - Virginia Institute for Public Policy               | Interior energy portfolio  | Richmond, VA          |
| 4/10 Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation  | Federal Offshore Oil & Gas Leasing & Development                 | New Orleans, LA       |
| 4/10 Greg Sheehan       | Principal Deputy Director            | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management  |  | Sheperdstown, WV      |
| 4/12 Alan Mikkelsen     | Senior Advisor                       | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Klamath Water Users Association Annual Meeting                               |  | Klamath Falls, OR     |
| 4/12 John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs                                 | Consultation Part 151 Regulations  |  | Mashantucket, CT      |
| 4/13 Scott Angelle      | Director                             | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement | 2018 National Ocean Industries Association                                   |  | Washington, DC        |
| 4/13 Walter Cruickshank | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management              | 2018 National Ocean Industries Association                                   |  | Washington, DC        |
| 4/13 Kate MacGregor     | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Land and Minerals Management                   | National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA)                                 |  | Washington, DC        |

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| 4/16 Ben Cassidy                        | Senior Deputy Director               | Intergovernmental and External Affairs                  | American Council of Snowmobile Associations                      | Motorized access<br>Administration's energy<br>policy strategy | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/16 Vincent DeVito                     | Counselor for Energy Policy          | Office of the Secretary                                 | Northern California Power Agency Conference                      |  | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/17 Doug Domenech<br>David Palumbo and | Assistant Secretary                  | Insular and International Affairs                       | Flag Day   |  | American Samoa                        |
| 4/17 Gray Payne                         | Deputy Commissioner                  | Bureau of Reclamation                                   | National Association of Clean Water Agencies                     | Infrastructure   | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/17 James Cason                        | Associate Deputy Secretary           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                          | Board of Directors   |  | Phoenix, AZ                           |
|   |                                      |   | BLM National Project Support Team Meeting                        |  |                                       |
| 4/18 Austin Ewell                       | Deputy Assistant Secretary           | Water and Science                                       | HayWired Rollout   |  | Berkeley, CA                          |
| 4/18 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | National Indian Gaming Association Annual Membership Meeting     |  | Las Vegas, NV                         |
| 4/19 Tucker Davis                       | Advisor                              | Office of Surface Mining<br>Reclamation and Enforcement | Virginia Coal and Energy Alliance's Annual Arbor Day Celebration |  | Vansant, VA                           |
| 4/24 Susan Combs                        | Acting Assistant Secretary           | Fish, Wildlife and Parks                                | Texas Association of Business                                    |  | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/24 Susan Combs                        | Acting Assistant Secretary           | Fish, Wildlife and Parks                                | Texas Farm Bureau  |  | Washington, DC                        |
| 4/25 Doug Domenech                      | Assistant Secretary                  | Insular and International Affairs                       | Flag Day   |  | American Samoa                        |
| 4/25 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | 2018 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference       | Reorganization   | Albuquerque, NM                       |
| 4/26 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | Coalition of Large Tribes  |  | Albuquerque, NM                       |
| 4/27 Kathleen Benedetto                 | Senior Adviser                       | Bureau of Land Management                               | Good Samaritan Protection to Enhance Abandoned Mine Land Cleanup |  | Golden, CO (Colorado School of Mines) |
| 4/30 Scott Angelle                      | Director                             | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement          | Offshore Technology Conference                                   |  | Houston, TX                           |
| 4/30 Walter Cruickshank                 | Acting Director                      | Bureau of Ocean Energy Management                       | Offshore Technology Conference                                   |  | Houston, TX                           |
| 4/30 John Tahsuda                       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary | Indian Affairs  | Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes                |  | Artesia, NM                           |
| 4/30 Susan Combs                        | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Lakewood, CO                          |
| 5/1 Susan Combs                         | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Albuquerque, NM                       |
| 5/2 Susan Combs                         | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Grand Junction, CO                    |
| 5/3 Susan Combs                         | Senior Advisor                       | Office of the Secretary                                 | Reorganization Listening Session                                 |  | Cheyenne, WY                          |

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| 5/3 Scott Angelle      | Director                                   | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement | Offshore Technology Conference   | Houston, TX         |
| 5/3 Rick May           | Senior National Adviser for Recreation     | Office of the Secretary                        | RV Power Breakfast   | Elkhart, IN         |
| 5/9 Kathleen Benedetto | Advisor                                    | Bureau of Land Management                      | BLM's Nevada Solid Minerals Training Conference  | Winnemucca, NV      |
| 5/9 David Bernhardt    | Deputy Secretary                           | Office of the Deputy Secretary                 | Assn. of California Water Agencies   | Sacramento, CA      |
| 5/9 John Tahsuda       | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary       | Indian Affairs                                 | Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association   | Washington, DC      |
| 5/11 Cally Younger     | Acting Deputy Solicitor for Land Resources | Office of the Solicitor                        | National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference   | Louisville, KY      |
| 5/12 Steve Wackowski   | Senior Advisor for Alaska                  | Office of the Secretary                        | Alaska Safari Club Annual Spring Meeting   | Anchorage, AK       |
| 5/14 Brenda Burman     | Commissioner                               | Bureau of Reclamation                          | Lake Nighthorse Opening  | Lake Nighthorse, CO |
| 5/16 Aurelia Skipwith  | Deputy Assistant Secretary                 | Fish, Wildlife and Parks                       | 15th Annual Stewardship Partnership Meeting - Southern Company and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation | Biloxi, MS          |
| 5/22 Vincent DeVito    | Counselor for Energy Policy                | Office of the Secretary                        | Energy Exposition 2018, Organized by Kit Jennings  | Loveland, CO        |
| 5/22 Greg Sheehan      | Principal Deputy Director                  | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                 | National Hunter and Angler Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) Summit                           | Lincoln, NE         |
| 5/23 John Tahsuda      | Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary       | Indian Affairs                                 | Tribal/Interior Budget Council   | Washington, DC      |
| 5/23 Todd Wynn         | Director                                   | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | Americans For Tax Reform, Coalition Leaders Summit   | Anchorage, AK       |
| 5/25 Tim Williams      | Deputy Director                            | Intergovernmental and External Affairs         | NACO WIR   | Sun Valley, ID      |

| OCO Remarks?  | Press  | Audience   | Point of Contact                        |
|---------------|--------|--|---|
| Yes - drafted | ?      |  |   |
|               | Open   | General assembly/tribal leaders  | Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767         |
|               | Closed |  |   |
|               | Closed |  |   |
|               | Closed |  |   |
|               | Closed | Members of the Nat'l Mining Association  |   |
|               | Open   |  |   |
|               | Open   | General assembly/tribal leaders  | Brian Clodoosby, (202) 466-7767         |
| Yes - drafted | Open   | MT tribal leaders  | Sonja Twoleggins (406) 252-2550         |
|               | ?      | Environmental lawyers  |   |
|               | Open   | AK tribal leaders  | Alaska Federation Nation (907) 274-3611 |
| Yes - drafted | Open   | Oil and gas industry   |   |
|               | ?      |  |   |
|               | ?      | Tribal   |   |
|               | Closed | Chemical plant managers from LA<br>Federal and state<br>government/private government<br>contractors |   |
|               | Open   |  |   |
|               | ?      |  |   |

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|---------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
|               | Open<br>?                 | Energy industry, state and federal   |                                |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | Open                      |  |                                |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
| Yes           | Open unless<br>objections | Mining industry  |                                |
|               | Open                      | Local residents  |                                |
| Yes           | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | Closed                    |  |                                |
|               | Open<br>?                 | Scientists, engineers, students<br>Idaho ranchers                                    |                                |
| Yes - drafted | Closed                    | Congressional members  |                                |
|               | Open<br>?                 | Oil and gas industry   |                                |
| TBD Yes       | TBD                       | TBD  |                                |
|               | Closed                    | Board of Directors, staff<br>Federal and state government<br>rangeland weeds experts | Slade Franklin, (307) 777-6585 |
|               | ?                         |  |                                |
|               | Open                      | OR water users   |                                |
|               | Closed                    | Representatives of Mexico,<br>Canada, and US governments                             |                                |

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| Reviewed | Closed |  |  |
|          | Open   | CA public water agency leadership                            |  |
|          | Open   | CA public water agency leadership                            |  |
|          | ?      | Mining industry  | Pat Heywood,<br>pheywood@miningamerica.com |
|          | ?      | Various tribal leaders                                       |  |
|          | Closed | Offshore industry and oil and gas                            |  |
|          | ?      | Energy industry, federal and state officials.                |  |
|          | Open   |  |  |
|          | Closed |  |  |
|          | Closed | Leaders of the State Policy Network                          |  |
|          | Closed | State representatives and stakeholders                       |  |
|          | Open   | Mining industry  | Pat Heywood,<br>pheywood@miningamerica.com |
|          |        |  |  |
|          | ?      |  |  |
|          | ?      |  |  |
|          | Open   | Members of the oil and gas community, local business leaders |  |
|          | Closed |  |  |

|     |                       |  |
|-----|-----------------------|--|
|     | Open                  | Colorado River water users   |
| Yes | ?                     | CSF/DSC members  |
| Yes | ?                     | DSC members  |
|     | Closed                |  |
| Yes | Open                  | Retailers  |
|     | ?                     | Tribal leaders   |
|     | Open                  | Northern and Central CA water issues   |
|     | ?                     | Law students and Fed Soc members   |
|     | ?                     | Tribal leaders   |
|     | ?                     |  |
|     | Closed                |  |
|     | One trade publication | Agency officials, mitigation bankers, investors, Congressional members/staff |
|     | ?                     | Tribal   |
|     | ?                     | Tribal leaders   |
|     | Open                  |  |
|     | Closed                |  |
|     | Closed                | USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, USGS, and BSEE   |
|     | Open (limited)        |  |
|     | Open (local)          | Tribal   |
|     | ?                     | Tribal   |
|     | Closed                | FLA Board of Directors   |



|     |               |   |
|-----|---------------|---|
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
| Yes | ?             |   |
| Yes | Closed<br>?   | House Western Caucus Staff<br>Tribal  |
|     | ?             | Interior and Agriculture employees  |
|     | ?             | Interior and Agriculture employees  |
|     | ?<br>Open     | Interior and Agriculture employees<br>Tribal leaders  |
|     | ?<br><br>Open | Tribal<br>Federal officials, environmental<br>NGOs, local governments,<br>business groups<br>Local community members,<br>elected officials, others interested<br>in the legacy of Frederick<br>Douglass |
|     | Open<br>Open  | Industry  |
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
| Yes | Closed        | FreedomWorks volunteers   |
|     | ?             | Tribal  |
|     | Open          | Western water users   |

|     |        |  |
|-----|--------|--|
| Yes | Closed |  |
|     | ?      | Members of the Coral Reef Task Force   |
|     | Open   | Federal agency staff, governors, associations  |
|     | Open   | Officials from the region  |
|     | ?      | Tribal leaders   |
| Yes | Open   | Federal agency staff, governors, associations  |
|     |        | International group of senior level energy industry executives and government regulators |
|     | Closed |  |
|     | Closed |  |
|     | Closed | CXO Fellows  |
| Yes | ?      | Industry   |
|     | ?      | Western Caucus Foundation members  |
|     | ?      |  |
|     | ?      |  |
|     | Closed | Agency officials   |
| Yes | Open   | Policy experts, managers   |
|     | ?      | Tribal leaders   |
|     | Open   | Forum attendees  |
|     |        | Retailers/manufacturers in the fishing industry  |
|     | ?      |  |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Closed |   |
| Open   | Agencies, Committees, private sector                        |
| ?      | Tribal  |
| Open   | Agencies, Committees, private sector                        |
| Open   | Offshore wind industry                                      |
| Open   | Industry, trade associations                                |
| ?      |   |
| Closed | Council members   |
| Closed | Academics and students                                      |
| ?      | FedBar Organizations, Law                                   |
| Open   | Students  |
|        | NWRA members and water users                                |
| ?      | 2,000 members of the organization                           |
| Closed | Statewide public policy groups and stakeholders             |
| Closed | Lawyers, landmen, regulators                                |
| Open   | Conservation agency officials from U.S., Mexico, and Canada |
| Open   | Irrigated agriculture                                       |
| ?      | Tribal  |
| Closed | Trade association members                                   |
| Closed | Trade association members                                   |
| Closed |   |

|     |        |   |
|-----|--------|---|
|     | Closed | Snowmobile Assn. members  |
| Yes | Closed | Public power officials  |
|     | ?      | ?   |
|     | Closed | NACWA Board of Directors  |
|     | ?      | Team members  |
|     | Open   | General public, state and local partners, other stakeholders  |
|     | ?      | Tribal  |
|     | Open   | 300 sixth grade students, federal and state agencies  |
| Yes | ?      | Business, association, and civic leaders  |
|     | Closed | 30 Texas Farm Bureau leaders  |
|     | ?      |   |
|     | ?      | Tribal  |
|     | ?      | Tribal  |
|     | ?      | Federal agencies, Congressional, state agencies, industry   |
|     |        | Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector |
|     | Open   | Industry, trade associations,   |
|     | Open   | government, academia  |
|     | ?      | Law enforcement officers, tribal members  |
|     |        | Denver-based DOI SES  |
|     | Closed | employees   |
|     | Closed | Stakeholders/AG   |
|     | ?      | CLUB 20   |
|     | Closed | Cheyenne-area DOI employees   |

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Open         | Engineers, technicians, executives, operators, scientists, and managers from all fields in the offshore energy sector |
| Open         | RV enthusiasts, outdoor industry  |
| Closed       | BLM employees   |
| ?            | Elected board members, opinion leaders, general managers, legal counsel   |
| ?            | Tribal Leaders of 16 Tribal Nations from South Dakota, North Dakota, and Nebraska.                                    |
| Open         | Ecosystem banking and related markets   |
| Closed       | Safari Club International Alaska  |
| Open         | Chapter members   |
|              | General public  |
| Closed       |   |
| Not expected |   |
| Open         |   |
| ?            | Federal and Tribal Members  |
|              | Conservative think tanks and grassroots group leaders from around the country   |
| Closed       |   |
| Closed       | County Commissioners  |

## Conversation Contents

### Weekly Recap

### Attachments:

/35. Weekly Recap/1.1 Weekly Recap\_21May-27May2018.docx

**"Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 13:20:25 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Weekly Recap  
**Attachments:** Weekly Recap\_21May-27May2018.docx

Susan,

Please find attached a recap of last week's meetings and projects I worked on. Thank you.

**Aurelia Skipwith**

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Room 3148  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 208-5837

**NOTE:**

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## WEEKLY RECAP - MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 29, 2018

FROM: Aurelia Skipwith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

SUBJECT: Recap of Meeting, Briefings and Status of Projects – May 21 – May 27, 2018

### Meetings / Briefings:

- National Habitat Conservation Coalition, Brookfield Communities (Amoruso Ranch), Green Diamond – **COMPLETED**
  - o Provided publically available NEPA guidance on SO 3355 – NEPA Streamlining
- National Association for Historically Black Colleges and Universities Alumni Association
  - o Nest Steps: Connect this organization with FWS Contracting and inform them that FWS has National MOU to engage communities
  - o Briefing with FWS Contracting – **COMPLETED**
    - To provide information on compliance with Small Business Administration initiatives for minority and women owned business for smaller contracts.
- Leadership Training at the White House - **COMPLETED**
  - o May 22<sup>nd</sup> attended talks by White House leadership on navigating government organizations and the structure within the WH. Two speakers from Harvard outline methods to leading through large, complex emergency situations and communicating at all appropriate levels.
- ESA Monthly Briefing Meeting: follow up on American Burying Beetle. FWS to propose another meeting to discuss.
- Berkshire Hathaway Energy's request from FWS to file a waiver for NEPA compliance for page length the waiver was not accepted. - **COMPLETED**
- Envision Centers by Housing and Urban Development – *On-going*
  - o WH Cabinet Affairs is inviting leads of agencies to participate in the opening of the Envision Centers in Detroit, which is a kick-off of their Envision Center initiatives and seeking support from other federal agencies. In early June, HUD unveiling three Center in Detroit and soon there'll be twenty Centers. HUD assists over 5 million people; these Centers to include internship opportunities and collaboration with local federal entities nearby, like refuges, etc.
  - o Follow-up conversation in ~3 weeks.
- Ethics: Certificate of Divestiture requested from SOL and Office of General Law for selling my stock and relinquishing my stock options. **COMPLETED**
  - o CD requested was rejected. I sold my stock on Thursday, May 24, 2018.

### Ongoing Projects:

- Information provided in response to Congressional/Legislative Affairs' inquiry about the difference between the 10(j) rule making and the re-introduction of grizzly bears. - **COMPLETED**
- Arkansas' Old White River Bridge – *On-going*
  - o State Court filed another extension (45 days) not to demolish the bridge. In November 2017, DOI-SOL issued our position that the ~3 mile bridge on refuge land could not remain, because inconsistent with Refuge mission and FWS agreement with Arkansas Dept of Transportation and Federal Highway. Extension was granted, because this

Friends Groups asserted that DOI's position had changed and the Friends Group approached the State Parks to take ownership. SOL is working with Arkansas Deputy Attorney General, since neither FWS or DOI is a party in this case.

- Mountain Valley Pipeline – *On-going*
  - o US Forest Service request to extend tree felling for Mountain Valley Pipeline; worked with FWS, FS, FERC and determined that FS is the action agency who will put request into FWS since extending the permit falls within the bats breeding season. FWS has reviewed and is okay with the proposed extension.
- Wilderness Study Areas – *On-going*
  - o Refugees briefed Cason and myself on wilderness study areas. FWS to provide the following information 1) SOL opinion on appropriateness in applying the relevant Wilderness Act to submerged lands 2) Map of Wilderness Study Areas in Refuge System (a map of designed wilderness areas in Refuge System already exists) and 3) a Copy of National Wildlife Refuge Systems Policy on Wilderness Areas
- National Association of Aquaculture – *On-going*
  - o Outstanding item to resolve is the inspections performed by USDA and FWS for the same virus and requires separate permit from FWS and USDA. Goal is to streamline process. Working with Scott Cameron.
- Garrison Diversion Conservancy District – *On-going*
  - o FWS to brief DOI's Water & Science on May 30<sup>th</sup> about FWS's conclusion of likely to adversely affect and potential conservation measures to mitigate impacts. Also, will discuss applicant's timeline/deadlines.
- Medgar Evers – *On-going*
  - o Drafted letter and worked with DOI & NPS Comms for Secretary's Letter recognizing the plaque ceremony for Medgar Evers home as National Historic Landmark
  - o Call with Tougaloo College confirmed they'd like NPF to pay for real estate related transactions, but want to select the entity performing the real estate activities.
  - o Confirmed the NPS team that will work on drafting a legal document for Tougaloo's potential interest in interpretative and joint management.
  - o Phase 2: Planning outreach for designation within African American Civil Rights Network
- Public Access to Rattlesnake Mountain in Hanford Reach National Monument – *On-going*
  - o FWS has completed the requirements under the 2015 order to engage the four Tribes.
  - o Requested FWS to provide the timeline for completing NEPA; at the end of the week, FWS to send out FR Notice for draft EIS for expanded public access. I provided this update to Micah.
- American Forest Resource Council: *On-going*
  - o Met with AFRC to discuss Washington Department of Natural Resources' decision to support an FWS alternative not proposed for a vote by the public. Next vote is planned for Summer 2018 for the long term conservation strategy. Follow up discussion with FWS and Washington DNR.

#### **Still on Radar – Waiting for Response and nothing to Report**

T-Mobile: *On-going, but nothing to do at this time*

- Shane Compton working to resolve questions and concerns NPS has, which has resulted in the delay of 13-14 T-Mobile's projects.

Formal Consultation on Re-Registration of 3 Pesticides: EPA, USDA, NMFS - *On-going*



- Directed by DS Bernhardt to review Biological Opinions (NOAA) and past decisions on the 3 chemicals under EPA's review.
- FWS trying to obtain usage data - FWS met with Applicants and EPA to obtain additional data to determine actual application of pesticides and overlay that information with habitat and presence of T&E species.

#### **Upcoming Events**

##### **US Coast Guard Change of Command Ceremony**

- *Event Date: June 1<sup>th</sup> , 2018 in Washington, DC at 11am*
- *Purpose: Recognition of then former Commandant and celebrate new Commandant and maintain a good working relationship with their organization.*
- *I received an invitation to attend, non-speaking. **Submitted to Ethics for review and approval***

## Conversation Contents

**Fwd: [EXTERNAL] American Burying Beetle Comments for Consideration**

**Attachments:**

/36. Fwd: [EXTERNAL] American Burying Beetle Comments for Consideration/1.1 ABB Letter for Consideration.pdf

**"Willens, Todd" <todd\_willens@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Willens, Todd" <todd\_willens@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 09:40:41 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>, "Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>, Katie Mills <katie\_mills@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] American Burying Beetle Comments for Consideration  
**Attachments:** ABB Letter for Consideration.pdf

FYI

Todd Willens  
Assistant Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW -- MIB Room 6116  
Washington, DC 20240  
office: 202-208-6291

NOTE: Every email I send or receive is subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Lynch, James M.** <[jim.lynch@klgates.com](mailto:jim.lynch@klgates.com)>  
Date: Mon, May 21, 2018 at 4:25 PM  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] American Burying Beetle Comments for Consideration  
To: "[don\\_morgan@fws.gov](mailto:don_morgan@fws.gov)" <[don\\_morgan@fws.gov](mailto:don_morgan@fws.gov)>  
Cc: Greg Sheehan <[greg\\_j\\_sheehan@fws.gov](mailto:greg_j_sheehan@fws.gov)>, "Todd Willens ([Todd\\_willens@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Todd_willens@ios.doi.gov))" <[Todd\\_willens@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Todd_willens@ios.doi.gov)>

Please see attached comments concerning the pending regulatory action for American Burying beetle noted in the recently-published Unified Agenda.

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**Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>**

---

**From:** Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 09:52:26 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Willens, Todd" <[todd\\_willens@ios.doi.gov](mailto:todd_willens@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] American Burying Beetle Comments for Consideration

Thx

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2018, at 10:40 AM, Willens, Todd <[todd\\_willens@ios.doi.gov](mailto:todd_willens@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

FYI

**Todd Willens**  
**Assistant Deputy Secretary**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**1849 C Street, NW -- MIB Room 6116**  
**Washington, DC 20240**  
**office: 202-208-6291**

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**From:** **Lynch, James M.** <[jim.lynch@klgates.com](mailto:jim.lynch@klgates.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, May 21, 2018 at 4:25 PM  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] American Burying Beetle Comments for Consideration  
**To:** "[don\\_morgan@fws.gov](mailto:don_morgan@fws.gov)" <[don\\_morgan@fws.gov](mailto:don_morgan@fws.gov)>  
**Cc:** Greg Sheehan <[greg\\_j\\_sheehan@fws.gov](mailto:greg_j_sheehan@fws.gov)>, "Todd Willens ([Todd\\_willens@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Todd_willens@ios.doi.gov))" <[Todd\\_willens@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Todd_willens@ios.doi.gov)>

Please see attached comments concerning the pending regulatory action for American Burying beetle noted in the recently-published Unified Agenda.

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message.

<ABB Letter for Consideration.pdf>

# K&L GATES

May 21, 2018

## VIA EMAIL

Mr. Don R. Morgan  
Chief, Branch of Recovery and State Grants, Ecological Services Program  
Department of the Interior  
United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
ARLSQ-420, 5275 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, VA 22041-3808  
Email: don\_morgan@fws.gov

Re: Comments on Notice of Proposed Reclassification of American Burying Beetle

Dear Mr. Morgan:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with comments on the proposed reclassification of the American burying beetle from an endangered species to a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the proposed issuance of a rule under section 4(d) of the ESA tailoring prohibitions to those activities that are most likely to harm the American burying beetle (*Nicrophorus americanus*) and its habitats. We provide these comments on behalf of a number of clients we represent in the farming, land use, and energy sectors that operate within the range of this species.

By way of background, American burying beetle has been listed as an endangered species for over 29 years. Parties operating with the range of this species are often impacted by the presence, or perceived presence, of the species on private lands where otherwise lawful activities occur, such as farming, oil and gas development, electrical transmission line construction and operation, and alternative energy development. These activities are essential to the local and regional economies in which they occur, and are often disrupted by the application of ESA Section 9 take prohibitions to private lands.

In recent years, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has attempted to develop regulatory mechanisms that are intended to expedite permitting processes that may be required to conduct activities on private lands. These permitting processes ultimately require private landowners or developers to pay large sums of money to acquire mitigation credits in exchange for obtaining a timely incidental take permit for the species. In many cases, the cost of mitigation credits, when they are readily available, can exceed \$15,000 per acre of habitat temporarily or permanently disturbed. These expenditures often make it impossible to conduct activities on private lands. The need for this type of mitigation is also unclear, and likely far exceeds that necessary to conserve the listed species.

We understand that the FWS is currently considering how best to tailor prohibitions in a manner that avoids unnecessary burdens to private landowners, while at the same time conserving the American burying beetle and its habitats. We also understand that FWS is responding to a recent law suit from the oil and gas industry, and will be meeting internally over the next several weeks to consider its position on these matters.

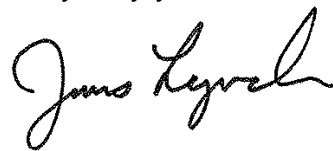
We believe there is mounting evidence that this species should be delisted. We also believe that otherwise lawful activities occurring on private lands should be excluded from the ESA Section 9 take prohibitions, and that instead, the burden of species recovery should be placed on federal lands and federal actions within the range of the listed species. The FWS should propose a 4(d) rule adopting this approach given the conservation status of the species, as well as the ability of the federal government to better manage this issue on its lands as opposed to private landowners. Activities that possess a federal nexus would remain covered under ESA Section 7, and may require consultation prior to their initiation. These protections are more than adequate.

Alternatively, FWS should adopt a 4(d) rule that provides specific, low-cost avoidance and minimization measures that private landowners can easily implement on private lands to conserve the species. In doing so, the FWS should make clear that it is unnecessary to pay large sums of money to acquire mitigation credit if low-cost avoidance and minimization measures are voluntarily implemented on private lands.

We stand ready to discuss these matters in more detail with the FWS as it deliberates over a proposed 4(d) rule for this species. We urge FWS to include practical and feasible approaches in any proposed 4(d) rule issued for this species, and to work closely with the farming and development community early in this process as it does so.

Your consideration with respect to this matter is appreciated. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you on these and other conservation initiatives.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Lynch", written in a cursive style.

James M. Lynch

Cc: Mr. Greg Sheehan  
Mr. Todd Willens

## Conversation Contents

### Update during Political Meeting

#### Attachments:

/37. Update during Political Meeting/1.1 Political Update.docx

**"Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 06:36:37 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Update during Political Meeting  
**Attachments:** Political Update.docx

Good morning Susan,

I hope you are enjoying your time off and had a wonderful Memorial day.

Would you like for me to provide FWP's update in the political meeting? If so, would you like me to add anything to the list items in the attached document? Thank you.

#### **Aurelia Skipwith**

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Room 3148  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 208-5837

#### NOTE:

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**Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 08:46:57 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Update during Political Meeting

Please do update.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2018, at 7:36 AM, Skipwith, Aurelia <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

Good morning Susan,

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<Political Update.docx>

---

**"Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>**

**From:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 09:12:51 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** Ryan Hambleton <ryan\_hambleton@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Update during Political Meeting

Susan,

Ryan had stopped by my office earlier to let me know that the Secretary's Office requested him to provide the update. So, I provided Ryan with the list I sent you for him to put together and give today's update. Thank you.

**Aurelia Skipwith**

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

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<Political Update.docx>

---

**Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>**

**From:** Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tue May 29 2018 09:20:19 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Skipwith, Aurelia" <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)>  
**CC:** Ryan Hambleton <[ryan\\_hambleton@ios.doi.gov](mailto:ryan_hambleton@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Update during Political Meeting

Ok. Thx.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2018, at 10:12 AM, Skipwith, Aurelia <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

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*Every email I send or receive is subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act.*

On Tue, May 29, 2018 at 10:46 AM, Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

Please do update.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2018, at 7:36 AM, Skipwith, Aurelia <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

Good morning Susan,

I hope you are enjoying your time off and had a wonderful Memorial day.

Would you like for me to provide FWP's update in the political meeting? If so, would you like me to add anything to the list items in the attached document? Thank you.

**Aurelia Skipwith**

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Room 3148  
Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 208-5837

NOTE:

*Every email I send or receive is subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act.*

<Political Update.docx>

### **Fish and Wildlife Service**

- End of May, FWS will make the final Recovery Plan Supplement for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) Distinct Population Segment of grizzly bears publicly available. FWS is required to complete habitat-based recovery criteria for each ecosystem prior to any proposal to delist bears under the ESA within that ecosystem. The Recovery Plan Supplement only applies to federal lands within the NCDE grizzly bear recovery zone.
- Late May, FWS is providing for public inspection the final supplemental environmental impact statement on the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's request to amend its Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and incidental take permit. The amendment would authorize additional incidental take of the threatened grizzly bear, Canada lynx, bull trout and unlisted westslope cutthroat trout associated with forest management on 81,416 acres proposed to be added to the HCP.
- In response to a petition to delist the species, on or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to reclassify the American burying beetle from an endangered species to a threatened species.

### **National Park Service**

- On May 30, the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commissioners will informally tour Independence National Historical Park. The formal kick-off event that was originally scheduled for this day has been postponed until the fall.
- On June 1, construction crews will begin temporary stabilization repairs on Arlington Memorial Bridge. The project start was delayed to accommodate the Rolling Thunder special event over Memorial Day weekend. This repair work is designed to keep the bridge open during its full rehabilitation
- On June 4, contractor bids are due to rebuild the Sperry Chalet. The first phase of work is tentatively set to begin summer 2018.
- Last week,
  - o NPS published a notice announcing that the Department has authorized the preparation of a World Heritage nomination for the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio; this series of mounds is approximately 2,000 years old. The nomination file, which will take more than a year to draft, will be developed by local proponents in Ohio with guidance from the NPS.
  - o Announced the designation of 19 national recreation trails in 17 states, adding more than 370 miles to the national recreation trails system of more than 1,000 trails in all 50 states.

# Conversation Contents

## Weekly Report

### Attachments:

/38. Weekly Report/1.1 Weekly Report week of 5.21.18.docx

**"Fink, Wendy" <wendy\_r\_fink@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Fink, Wendy" <wendy\_r\_fink@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri May 25 2018 13:01:48 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Weekly Report  
**Attachments:** Weekly Report week of 5.21.18.docx

Hi Susan. Please find attached my weekly report for the week of the 21st.

I hope you have a fantastic weekend (b) (6) !

Wendy

--

**Wendy R. Fink**

Counselor to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St NW | MS 3145 | Washington D.C. 20240  
P|202.208.4615

**Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Sat May 26 2018 06:10:39 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Fink, Wendy" <wendy\_r\_fink@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Weekly Report

Same to you!!!

Sent from my iPhone

On May 25, 2018, at 2:01 PM, Fink, Wendy <[wendy\\_r\\_fink@ios.doi.gov](mailto:wendy_r_fink@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

Hi Susan. Please find attached my weekly report for the week of the 21st.

I hope you have a fantastic weekend (b) (6) !

Wendy

--

**Wendy R. Fink**

Counselor to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St NW | MS 3145 | Washington D.C. 20240  
P|202.208.4615

<Weekly Report week of 5.21.18.docx>

### Legislative Referrals

Reviewed OMB request for views on H.R. 2786, a bill to amend the Federal Power Act with respect to the criteria and process to qualify as a qualifying conduit hydropower facility.

Reviewed ASWS testimony on Review of the Federal National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program.

Reviewed USGS testimony on Continuous Oil and Gas Resources in the Piceance Basin within the Uinta-Piceance Province of Colorado and Utah.

Reviewed Commerce oversight testimony on Review of the Federal National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program.

Reviewed OMB request for views on H.R. 8, Water Resources Development Act of 2018.

Reviewed OMB request for views on H.R. 5321, Too Long; Didn't Read Act of 2018.

### Ongoing Issues

Briefing on Cultural Resources Management.

Elwha – ongoing discussions, negotiations, and meetings. Term sheet. Reviewed draft reprogramming letter.

Scheduling Blair Mountain briefing.

Reviewed DoD/DOI proposed draft ESA MOU.

### New Issues

Briefing on Concessions. Reviewed background material and laws.

American Burying Beetle. Ct. deadline discussion.

### Standing Meetings and Reports

Reviewed and provided comments to the weekly report.

Reviewed FWS congressional meeting memo.

Reviewed OCLA weekly report.

Reviewed FWS Congressional Affairs Update.

Weekly SOL/NPS meeting

# Conversation Contents

## Congressional Affairs Update

### Attachments:

/39. Congressional Affairs Update/1.1 5.25.18.docx

**"Gustavson, Angela" <angela\_gustavson@fws.gov>**

---

**From:** "Gustavson, Angela" <angela\_gustavson@fws.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri May 25 2018 12:51:25 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Angela Gustavson <angela\_gustavson@fws.gov>  
**BCC:** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Congressional Affairs Update  
**Attachments:** 5.25.18.docx

Good afternoon,

The Congressional Affairs Update for this week is attached.

- This week, the House passed the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), and the Senate Armed Services Committee advanced their version of the NDAA.
- In addition, the House and Senate both marked up their versions of the Water Resources Development Act.
- There were also a few hearings of interest to the Service this week.

Congress will be on recess next week, and our CAU will return early June when they are back in session.

Have a great long weekend.

Angela

Angela Gustavson  
Deputy Chief  
Division of Congressional and Legislative Affairs  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Office: 703-358-2253  
Mobile: 202-909-5105  
[angela\\_gustavson@fws.gov](mailto:angela_gustavson@fws.gov)

## CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS UPDATE

### *Division of Congressional and Legislative Affairs U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

May 25, 2018

#### 2018 Congressional Recess Schedule

| <i>Senate</i>                               | <i>Holidays &amp; Special Days</i>          | <i>House</i>                                   |
|---|---|--|
| <b>State Work Period</b><br>May 28-June 1   | <b>Memorial Day</b><br>May 28               | <b>District Work Period</b><br>May 28-June 1   |
| <b>State Work Period</b><br>July 2-July 6   | <b>Independence Day</b><br>July 4           | <b>District Work Period</b><br>July 2-July 6   |
| <b>State Work Period</b><br>Aug. 6-Sep. 3   | <b>Labor Day</b><br>Sep. 3                  | <b>District Work Period</b><br>July 30-Sep. 3  |
| Sep. 10-Sep. 11                             | <b>Rosh Hashanah</b>                        | Sep. 10-Sep. 11                                |
| Sep. 19                                     | <b>Yom Kippur</b>                           | <b>District Work Period</b><br>Sep. 17-Sep. 21 |
| Oct. 8                                      | <b>Columbus Day</b>                         | Oct. 8   |
| <b>State Work Period</b><br>Oct. 29-Nov. 12 | <b>Veterans Day</b><br>Nov. 12 (observed)   | <b>District Work Period</b><br>Oct. 15-Nov. 9  |
| <b>State Work Period</b><br>Nov. 19-Nov. 23 | <b>Thanksgiving Day</b><br>Nov. 22          | <b>District Work Period</b><br>Nov. 19-Nov. 23 |
|   | <b>Targeted Adjournment Date</b><br>Dec. 14 |  |

#### UPDATES TO LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

##### House Passes NDAA for FY 2019

On Thursday, May 24, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 5515, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 by a vote of 351-66. The bill includes numerous provisions of interest to the Service, including: making permanent certain land withdrawals including for Desert NWR; allowing the administrative transfer of up to 5,000 acres of land between DOI and DOD; moving the implementation of the Sikes Act from the Service to DOI; amending the MMPA to extend the period of incidental take authorization requests from five to ten years; preventing the Service from listing the greater sage grouse and the lesser prairie chicken for ten years, effectively delisting the American burying beetle, and shielding all of these actions from judicial review; and amending the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to limit the state cost-share for shooting range construction, maintenance or expansion to 10 percent, and allowing the amounts provided under the Act to be available for five years.

One amendment of interest to the Service was included in the final legislation. Amendment 337, sponsored by **Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA-50)**, authorizes the transfer of DOI submerged lands in Womens Bay, AK in exchange for the privately held Ayakulik Island in Alaska; transfers



Coast Guard land to Hobe Sound NWR in FL; and creates Port Access Routes that prioritize shipping lanes over all other seaway uses. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

For more information, please visit: <https://armedservices.house.gov/ndaa>

### **Senate Committee Advances NDAA for FY 2019**

On Thursday, May 24, in a closed session, the Senate Armed Services Committee passed the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2019 by a vote of 25-2. Legislative text has not yet been made available to the public. The bill is expected to be considered by the full Senate in the coming weeks, and will then be conferenced with the House version to resolve any differences between the two bills.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/press-releases/sasc-completes-markup-of-national-defense-authorization-act-for-fiscal-year-2019>

### **House and Senate Committees Mark Up Water Resources Legislation**

This week, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure marked up their versions of the biennial Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). The Senate bill, S. 2800, the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, received a unanimous vote of 21-0 and was reported favorably out of committee. The House bill, H.R. 8, the Water Resources Development Act of 2018, was favorably reported out of committee by voice vote.

For more information on these bills, please visit:

- House: <https://transportation.house.gov/wrda-2018/>
- Senate: <https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings?ID=964CD9C3-41E8-4EC6-AD5D-825137A92390>

## **HEARINGS AND MARKUPS OF INTEREST**

### **House Subcommittee Examines Desert Tortoise HCP and PR-DJ Legislation**

On Tuesday, May 22, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a legislative hearing to discuss three bills, two of which are of interest to the Service.

H.R. 5597, sponsored by **Representative Chris Stewart (R-UT-2)**, effectively extends the Desert Tortoise Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) in Washington County, Utah with a proposed amendment facilitating construction of a highway through the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve.

- **Rep. Stewart** discussed how the bill would facilitate development, particularly of the proposed highway, while protecting desert tortoise habitat and recreational opportunities.
- **Ranking Member Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI-1)** highlighted disagreement on the need for a new highway. She also discussed historic declines of desert tortoise populations in the region. **Rep. Stewart** countered that tortoise populations have stabilized since the approval of the original HCP.
- **Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA-47)** suggested that the proposed highway is inconsistent with the establishment of the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve for tortoise conservation.

- **Chairman Tom McClintock (R-CA-4)** discussed local support for the bill and HCP and rebuked the opposition of non-elected officials.

H.R. 5875, sponsored by **Delegate Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU)** amends the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson Acts to create funding parity between the states and U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.

- **Del. Bordallo (D-GU)** stated that the bill is supported by all territories and the District of Columbia. She also asked the witness if the bill would enable the territories to receive increased opportunities for restoration projects, and how parity could help territories better help their sportsmen communities. Del. Bordallo also discussed discrepancies with license data, but noted that hunting and fishing is very popular on the island territories.
- **Del. Gonzalez-Colon (R-AL-PR)** noted that the bill would provide justice for territories and equality for islands regarding federal programs; adding that the territories do not receive their current apportionments for free, that they are still required to provide a 25 percent match.
- **Chairman McClintock (R-CA-4)** asked about the fees that territories pay into the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration accounts, noting that there are fees paid by territories but they do not receive equal consideration under the law.
- **Ranking Member Hanabusa (D-HI-1)** asked about the amount of lost funds due to the unequal treatment.
- **Delegate Gregorio Sablan (D-CNMI)** stated that all territories would receive around \$32 million if parity was received.
- **Representative Bruce Westerman (R-AR-4)** asked about the sportfishing industry on Puerto Rico, and the contributions that are also received from the motor boat fuel tax. Rep. Westerman stated that if Puerto Rico is actively contributing to the program, they should receive equal consideration.
- **Chairman Rob Bishop (R-UT-1)** stated that Puerto Rico could be receiving nearly \$8 million in funds versus what they are receiving now, which was said to be around \$6 million for both programs.

For more information, please visit:

<https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=404730>

### **House Committee Postpones Markup of FY 2019 Interior Appropriations Legislation**

On Tuesday, May 22, the House Committee on Appropriations was scheduled to hold a full committee markup of the spending bill for the Department of the Interior for FY 2019. The bill would fund the Service at \$1.6 billion, a \$11 million decrease below the FY 2018 enacted level. The markup has been postponed and has not yet been rescheduled.

For more information, please visit:

<https://appropriations.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=395302>

### **Senate Committee Holds Markup on Shark Conservation Legislation**

On Tuesday, May 22, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation held a markup of several bills referred to the Committee, including one of interest to the Service. S. 2764, sponsored by **Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL)**, requires that imports of shark products only

be allowed into the U.S. from countries with conservation standards and management programs certified by the Secretary of Commerce. The bill was reported favorably out of Committee by voice vote.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings?ID=66C08C71-DD0D-4EDA-B064-368BE9100314>

### **House Committee Discusses International Wildlife Conservation and Wildlife Trafficking**

On Tuesday, May 22, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs held an oversight hearing titled “Advancing Effective Conservation Policy Worldwide: Successes, Challenges, and Next Steps.” No federal witnesses testified at the hearing. The discussion primarily focused on the connections between international terrorist groups and wildlife trafficking rings, as well as the need to build local capacity in international countries to combat poaching and conserve biodiversity. Questions from Members centered on how to make law enforcement and interagency coordination more effective, as well the impacts of proposed funding cuts in the FY 2019 budgets on wildlife trafficking efforts. **Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA-39)** and **Ranking Member Eliot Engel (D-NY-16)** also praised the Services’ Operation Jungle Book and Operation Crash as success stories in bringing wildlife smuggling rings to justice.

For more information, please visit:

<https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/chairman-royce-announces-wildlife-trafficking-hearing/>

### **House Committee Holds Markup of African Wildlife Conservation Legislation**

On Tuesday, May 22, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs held a markup of H.R. 4819, “Defending Economic Livelihoods and Threatened Animals Act (DELTA),” sponsored by **Representative Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE-1)**. The bill helps to build local capacity to protect wildlife and biodiversity and create economic growth in the greater Okavango River Basin in southern Africa. During the markup, **Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA-39)** offered an amendment in nature of a substitute that provided new base text for the bill. The amendment was agreed to by voice vote and the legislation passed out of committee by unanimous consent.

For more information, please visit:

<https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/markup/markup-h-r-4819/>

## **INTRODUCED LEGISLATION OF INTEREST**

**H.R.5969 — To prohibit the use of Federal funds for the provision of broadband service in any State that has in effect a law, regulation, or other requirement that prohibits, limits, places conditions on, or regulates the provision of broadband service by public, cooperative, or nonprofit broadband providers.**

Sponsor: Rep. Pocan, Mark [D-WI-2] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

Latest Action: House - 05/24/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

**H.R.5957 — To establish the Caddo Lake National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Rep. Gohmert, Louie [R-TX-1] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (2)

Committees: House - Natural Resources

Latest Action: House - 05/24/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

**H.Res.912 — Recognizing the importance of the Chesapeake Bay and supporting the efforts and goals of the Clean the Bay Day.**

Sponsor: Rep. Brat, Dave [R-VA-7] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (9)

Committees: House - Natural Resources

Latest Action: House - 05/24/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

**S.2978 — A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to modify the conservation reserve enhancement program, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (2)

Committees: Senate - Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

Latest Action: Senate - 05/24/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

**S.2971 — A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to prohibit animal fighting in the United States territories.**

Sponsor: Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (1)

Committees: Senate - Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

Latest Action: Senate - 05/24/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

**S.2970 — A bill to amend the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 to provide requirements on the use of assistance for broadband deployment, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Sen. Daines, Steve [R-MT] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (1)

Committees: Senate - Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

Latest Action: Senate - 05/24/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

**S.2968 — A bill to amend the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 to clarify whistleblower rights and protections, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Sen. Duckworth, Tammy [D-IL] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: Senate - Energy and Natural Resources

Latest Action: Senate - 05/24/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

**S.2957 — A bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Sen. Crapo, Mike [R-ID] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (9)

Committees: Senate - Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Latest Action: Senate - 05/24/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

**S.2947 — A bill to establish the Caddo Lake National Heritage Area, and for other purposes**

Sponsor: Sen. Cassidy, Bill [R-LA] (Introduced 05/24/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: Senate - Energy and Natural Resources

Latest Action: Senate - 05/24/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

**H.R.5939 — To amend the Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation Act.**

Sponsor: Rep. Grijalva, Raul M. [D-AZ-3] (Introduced 05/23/2018) Cosponsors: (1)

Committees: House - Education and the Workforce, Natural Resources

Latest Action: House - 05/23/2018 Referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

**H.R.5931 — To repeal the authority to establish certain special volunteer programs under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.**

Sponsor: Rep. Biggs, Andy [R-AZ-5] (Introduced 05/23/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: House - Education and the Workforce

Latest Action: House - 05/23/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

**S.2942 — A bill to amend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to establish January 31 of each year as the Federal closing date for duck hunting season and to establish special duck hunting days for youths, veterans, and active military personnel, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Sen. Hyde-Smith, Cindy [R-MS] (Introduced 05/23/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: Senate - Environment and Public Works

Latest Action: Senate - 05/23/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

**S.2936 — A bill to improve soil moisture and precipitation monitoring, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Sen. Thune, John [R-SD] (Introduced 05/23/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: Senate - Energy and Natural Resources

Latest Action: Senate - 05/23/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

**H.R.5911 — To amend Public Law 115-97 (commonly known as the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act) to repeal the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge oil and gas program, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Rep. Huffman, Jared [D-CA-2] (Introduced 05/22/2018) Cosponsors: (4)

Committees: House - Natural Resources

Latest Action: House - 05/22/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

**S.2907 — A bill to provide for the withdrawal and protection of certain Federal land in the State of New Mexico.**

Sponsor: Sen. Udall, Tom [D-NM] (Introduced 05/22/2018) Cosponsors: (1)

Committees: Senate - Energy and Natural Resources

Latest Action: Senate - 05/22/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

**H.R.5900 — To provide for a national strategy to address and overcome Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Rep. Smith, Christopher H. [R-NJ-4] (Introduced 05/21/2018) Cosponsors: (4)

Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

Latest Action: House - 05/21/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

**H.R.5897 — To require the Secretary of the Army to expedite the completion of certain feasibility studies and reports and to amend the Coastal Barrier Resources Act to ensure public safety, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Rep. Weber, Randy K., Sr. [R-TX-14] (Introduced 05/21/2018) Cosponsors: (20)

Committees: House - Transportation and Infrastructure, Natural Resources

Latest Action: House - 05/21/2018 Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

**S.2886 — A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to reinstate the ban on the export of crude oil and natural gas produced in the United States, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA] (Introduced 05/21/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: Senate - Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Latest Action: Senate - 05/21/2018 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

**H.R.5885 — To reauthorize the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and certain wildlife conservation funds, to establish prize competitions relating to the prevention of wildlife poaching and trafficking, wildlife conservation, the management of invasive species, and the protection of endangered species, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Rep. Lowenthal, Alan S. [D-CA-47] (Introduced 05/18/2018) Cosponsors: (1)

Committees: House - Natural Resources, Science, Space, and Technology

Latest Action: House - 05/18/2018 Referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

**H.R.5878 — To provide for a national strategy to address and overcome Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Rep. Smith, Christopher H. [R-NJ-4] (Introduced 05/18/2018) Cosponsors: (0)

Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

Latest Action: House - 05/18/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

**H.R.5875 — To amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the Dingell-Johnson Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, to provide parity for United States territories and the District of Columbia, to make technical corrections to such Acts and related laws, and for other purposes.**

Sponsor: Rep. Bordallo, Madeleine Z. [D-GU-At Large] (Introduced 05/18/2018) Cosponsors: (5)

Committees: House - Natural Resources

Latest Action: House - 05/18/2018 Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

**H.R.8 — Water Resources Development Act of 2018**

Sponsor: Rep. Shuster, Bill [R-PA-9] (Introduced 05/18/2018) Cosponsors: (3)

Committees: House - Transportation and Infrastructure

Latest Action: House - 05/23/2018 Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.

# Conversation Contents

Fwd: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB

**"Fink, Wendy" <wendy\_r\_fink@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Fink, Wendy" <wendy\_r\_fink@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri May 25 2018 08:43:19 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Aurelia Skipwith <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>, Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB

Fyi. Let me know if either of you have heard anything different about being able to meet an August 31st deadline.

Wendy

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jesup, Benjamin** <[benjamin.jesup@sol.doi.gov](mailto:benjamin.jesup@sol.doi.gov)>  
Date: Fri, May 25, 2018 at 9:43 AM  
Subject: Re: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB  
To: "Wenger, Lance" <[lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov](mailto:lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov)>  
Cc: Wendy Fink <[wendy\\_r\\_fink@ios.doi.gov](mailto:wendy_r_fink@ios.doi.gov)>, Peg Romanik <[PEG.ROMANIK@sol.doi.gov](mailto:PEG.ROMANIK@sol.doi.gov)>

(b) (5)

Ben

On Fri, May 25, 2018 at 9:40 AM, Wenger, Lance <[lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov](mailto:lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov)> wrote:

(b) (5)

Thanks.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sheffield, Sarah (ENRD)** <[Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov](mailto:Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov)>  
Date: Fri, May 25, 2018 at 7:35 AM  
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB  
To: "Wenger, Lance" <[lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov](mailto:lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov)>

Hi Lance,

Please see Carey's message below. (b) (5)

Thanks,

Sarah



**From:** Galst, Carey <[carey\\_galst@fws.gov](mailto:carey_galst@fws.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 24, 2018 5:10 PM  
**To:** Sheffield, Sarah (ENRD) <[SSheffield@ENRD.USDOJ.GOV](mailto:SSheffield@ENRD.USDOJ.GOV)>  
**Cc:** Gilbert, Parks <[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)>; Frank Lupo <[Frank.Lupo@sol.doi.gov](mailto:Frank.Lupo@sol.doi.gov)>; Joan Goldfarb <[Joan.Goldfarb@sol.doi.gov](mailto:Joan.Goldfarb@sol.doi.gov)>; Melanie Ikenson <[melanie\\_ruiz@fws.gov](mailto:melanie_ruiz@fws.gov)>; Anne Garvin <[anne\\_garvin@fws.gov](mailto:anne_garvin@fws.gov)>; Willey, Seth <[seth\\_willey@fws.gov](mailto:seth_willey@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB

Hi Sarah -

(b) (5)

Parks is out through next Tuesday, so let me know if I can help with anything.

Thanks,

Carey

>< >< >< >< >< >< >< >< ><

### Carey Galst-Cavalcante

Chief, Branch of Listing Policy and Support, Ecological Services

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters  
[5275 Leesburg Pike](#) MS: ES, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803

phone: 703-358-1954; fax: 703-358-1735

email: [Carey\\_Galst@fws.gov](mailto:Carey_Galst@fws.gov)

On Thu, May 24, 2018 at 12:55 PM, Sheffield, Sarah (ENRD) <[Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov](mailto:Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov)> wrote:

Hi Parks,

Thanks for the update. (b) (5), but have some initial questions:

1. (b) (5) ?

2. (b) (5) ?

3. (b) (5)

I'm free all this afternoon if you want to discuss by phone. I'm also wondering (b) (5)

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Sarah

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**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB

Hey Sarah, et al.:

(b) (5)

Please let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks,

Parks

Parks Gilbert

Endangered Species Act Litigation Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[5275 Leesburg Pike](#), MS:ES

Falls Church, VA 22041

(703) 358-1758

[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)

On Thu, May 24, 2018 at 8:21 AM, Gilbert, Parks <[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)> wrote:

Will do. Carey can check in with Bridget on Tuesday, if we don't hear anything before. And just FYI, I'm out Friday - Tuesday, back Wednesday.

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Endangered Species Act Litigation Specialist

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On Wed, May 23, 2018 at 4:36 PM, Sheffield, Sarah (ENRD)  
<[Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov](mailto:Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov)> wrote:

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**From:** Gilbert, Parks <[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)>

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**Cc:** Frank Lupo <[Frank.Lupo@sol.doi.gov](mailto:Frank.Lupo@sol.doi.gov)>; Joan Goldfarb <[Joan.Goldfarb@sol.doi.gov](mailto:Joan.Goldfarb@sol.doi.gov)>;  
Melanie Ikenson <[melanie\\_ruiz@fws.gov](mailto:melanie_ruiz@fws.gov)>; Carey Galst <[Carey\\_Galst@fws.gov](mailto:Carey_Galst@fws.gov)>; Anne Garvin  
<[anne\\_garvin@fws.gov](mailto:anne_garvin@fws.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB

I can do a call tomorrow between 1-2p, (b) (5)

Carey: let's talk tomorrow morning and figure (b) (5)

Parks Gilbert

Endangered Species Act Litigation Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Falls Church, VA 22041

(703) 358-1758

[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)

On Wed, May 23, 2018 at 4:22 PM, Sheffield, Sarah (ENRD)  
<[Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov](mailto:Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov)> wrote:

Thanks, Parks. (b) (5)

I'm available for a call this afternoon or the rest of this week if it's best to discuss by phone.

Thanks,

Sarah

**From:** Gilbert, Parks <[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 23, 2018 4:18 PM

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**Cc:** Frank Lupo <[Frank.Lupo@sol.doi.gov](mailto:Frank.Lupo@sol.doi.gov)>; Joan Goldfarb <[Joan.Goldfarb@sol.doi.gov](mailto:Joan.Goldfarb@sol.doi.gov)>;  
Melanie Ikenson <[melanie\\_ruiz@fws.gov](mailto:melanie_ruiz@fws.gov)>; Carey Galst <[Carey\\_Galst@fws.gov](mailto:Carey_Galst@fws.gov)>; Anne  
Garvin <[anne\\_garvin@fws.gov](mailto:anne_garvin@fws.gov)>

**Subject:** update on ABB

Hey all,

(b) (5)

Thanks,

Parks

Parks Gilbert

Endangered Species Act Litigation Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[5275 Leesburg Pike](#), MS:ES

Falls Church, VA 22041

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[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)

--

*Lance Wenger  
Regional Solicitor - Southwest Region  
Office of the Solicitor  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(505) 248-5613*

--

Ben Jesup  
Assistant Solicitor for Fish and Wildlife  
Solicitor's Office  
Department of the Interior  
202-208-3170

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--

## Wendy R. Fink

Counselor to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St NW | MS 3145 | Washington D.C. 20240  
P|202.208.4615

## Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>

---

**From:** Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Fri May 25 2018 10:26:46 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Fink, Wendy" <[wendy\\_r\\_fink@ios.doi.gov](mailto:wendy_r_fink@ios.doi.gov)>  
**CC:** Aurelia Skipwith <[aurelia\\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov](mailto:aurelia_skipwith@ios.doi.gov)>, ryan\_hambleton@ios.doi.gov  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB

Haven't heard anything.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 25, 2018, at 9:43 AM, Fink, Wendy <[wendy\\_r\\_fink@ios.doi.gov](mailto:wendy_r_fink@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

Fyi. Let me know if either of you have heard anything different about (b) (5)

[REDACTED]

Wendy

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jesup, Benjamin** <[benjamin.jesup@sol.doi.gov](mailto:benjamin.jesup@sol.doi.gov)>

Date: Fri, May 25, 2018 at 9:43 AM  
Subject: Re: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB  
To: "Wenger, Lance" <[lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov](mailto:lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov)>  
Cc: Wendy Fink <[wendy\\_r\\_fink@ios.doi.gov](mailto:wendy_r_fink@ios.doi.gov)>, Peg Romanik <[PEG.ROMANIK@sol.doi.gov](mailto:PEG.ROMANIK@sol.doi.gov)>

(b) (5)

Ben

On Fri, May 25, 2018 at 9:40 AM, Wenger, Lance <[lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov](mailto:lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov)> wrote:

(b) (5)

Thanks.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sheffield, Sarah (ENRD)** <[Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov](mailto:Sarah.Sheffield@usdoj.gov)>  
Date: Fri, May 25, 2018 at 7:35 AM  
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: update on ABB  
To: "Wenger, Lance" <[lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov](mailto:lance.wenger@sol.doi.gov)>

Hi Lance,

Please see Carey's message below. (b) (5)

Thanks,

Sarah

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><> ><> ><> ><> ><> ><> ><> ><> ><> ><>

**Carey Galst-Cavalcante**

Chief, Branch of Listing Policy and Support, Ecological Services

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters  
[5275 Leesburg Pike](#) MS: ES, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803

phone: 703-358-1954; fax: 703-358-1735

email: [Carey\\_Galst@fws.gov](mailto:Carey_Galst@fws.gov)

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Please let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks,

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Endangered Species Act Litigation Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Carey Galst <[Carey\\_Galst@fws.gov](mailto:Carey_Galst@fws.gov)>; Anne Garvin <[anne\\_garvin@fws.gov](mailto:anne_garvin@fws.gov)>  
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(703) 358-1758

[parks\\_gilbert@fws.gov](mailto:parks_gilbert@fws.gov)

--

*Lance Wenger*  
*Regional Solicitor - Southwest Region*  
*Office of the Solicitor*  
*U.S. Department of the Interior*  
*(505) 248-5613*

--

Ben Jesup  
Assistant Solicitor for Fish and Wildlife  
Solicitor's Office  
Department of the Interior  
202-208-3170

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--

**Wendy R. Fink**

Counselor to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St NW | MS 3145 | Washington D.C. 20240  
P|202.208.4615

# Conversation Contents

## Weekly Report to the Secretary, May 27-June 2

### Attachments:

/41. Weekly Report to the Secretary, May 27-June 2/1.1 Weekly Report to the Secretary May 27-June 2.docx

**"Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Dermody, Matthew" <matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Thu May 24 2018 15:49:49 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
Alan Mikkelsen <amikkelsen@usbr.gov>, Alex Sterhan <asterhan@usbr.gov>, Andrea Travnicek <andrea\_travnicek@ios.doi.gov>, "Appel, Elizabeth" <elizabeth.appel@bia.gov>, Aurelia Skipwith <aurelia\_skipwith@ios.doi.gov>, Benjamin Cassidy <benjamin\_cassidy@ios.doi.gov>, Billy Dove <william\_dove@ios.doi.gov>, Brenda Burman <bburman@usbr.gov>, Cally Younger <cally.younger@sol.doi.gov>, Casey Hammond <casey\_hammond@ios.doi.gov>, Casey Stemler <casey\_stemler@fws.gov>, Catherine Gulac <catherine\_gulac@ios.doi.gov>, Christina Summers <christina\_summers@ibc.doi.gov>, Daniel Jorjani <daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov>, David Bernhardt <(b) (6) Bernhardt>, Debrah McBride <debrah.mcbride@bia.gov>, Doug Domenech <doug\_domenech@ios.doi.gov>, Downey Magallanes <downey\_magallanes@ios.doi.gov>, Edward Keable <edward.keable@sol.doi.gov>, Elinor Werner <elinor\_werner@ios.doi.gov>, Evan Wilson <evan\_wilson@ios.doi.gov>, Gareth Rees <gareth\_rees@ios.doi.gov>, Gary Lawkowski <gary\_lawkowski@ios.doi.gov>, Heather Swift <heather\_swift@ios.doi.gov>, James Reilly <jfreilly@usgs.gov>, James Voyles <james\_voyles@ios.doi.gov>, Jim Cason <james\_cason@ios.doi.gov>, Joe Balash <joseph\_balash@ios.doi.gov>, John Bockmier <john\_bockmier@ios.doi.gov>, John Tahsuda <john.tahsuda@bia.gov>, John Tanner <john\_tanner@ios.doi.gov>, Juliette Lillie <juliette\_lillie@ios.doi.gov>, Kate MacGregor <kate\_macgregor@ios.doi.gov>, Kathleen Benedetto <kbenedetto@blm.gov>, Katie Mills <katie\_mills@ios.doi.gov>, Kerry Rae <kerry\_rae@ios.doi.gov>, Lacey Smethers

**To:**

<lacey\_smethers@ios.doi.gov>, Laura Rigas  
<Laura\_Rigas@ios.doi.gov>, Lori Mashburn  
<lori\_mashburn@ios.doi.gov>, Mariagrazia Caminiti  
<marigrace.caminiti@sol.doi.gov>, Matthew Dermody  
<matthew\_dermody@ios.doi.gov>, Maureen Foster  
<maureen\_foster@ios.doi.gov>, Micah Chambers  
<micah\_chambers@ios.doi.gov>, Michael Argo  
<michael\_argo@ios.doi.gov>, Nikolao Pula  
<nikolao\_pula@ios.doi.gov>, Russell Newell  
<russell\_newell@ios.doi.gov>, Samantha Hebert  
<samantha\_hebert@ios.doi.gov>, Scott Cameron  
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<scott\_hommel@ios.doi.gov>, Steve Wackowski  
<stephen\_wackowski@ios.doi.gov>, Susan Combs  
<susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>, Tim Petty  
<timothy\_petty@ios.doi.gov>, Tim Williams  
<timothy\_williams@ios.doi.gov>, Todd Willens  
<todd\_willens@ios.doi.gov>, Todd Wynn  
<todd\_wynn@ios.doi.gov>, Vincent DeVito  
<Vincent\_DeVito@ios.doi.gov>, Zack Gambill  
<zachariah\_gambill@fws.gov>

**Subject:** Weekly Report to the Secretary, May 27-June 2  
**Attachments:** Weekly Report to the Secretary May 27-June 2.docx

All,

Attached is the Weekly Report to the Secretary for the week of May 27-June 2, in both Google Doc and Word formats. Note that this week's report also has a slight format change with the NEW, UPDATED, and ONGOING items grouped together under each of the time categories. This was suggested to improve readability and ensure people are seeing the top line items for each hallway.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Matthew Dermody  
Special Assistant  
Office of the Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
202-513-7778

 [Weekly Report to the Secretary May 27-June 2.docx](#)

**WEEKLY REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
MAY 27-JUNE 2, 2018**

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt will be in the office all week.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Todd Willens will be on official travel in Wyoming from Tuesday May 28th-Friday June 1.

Associate Deputy Secretary Jim Cason will be in the office all week.

**Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

No updates to report.

**15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

No updates to report.

**Awareness**

No updates to report.

**OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Congressional Hearings, and Travel**

Nothing significant to report.

**Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

**NEW CASES:**

*Native Ecosystems Council v. Marten* (D. Mont.) - N. Hebgen Project  
Environmental groups filed a challenge to the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS's) North Hebgen Project on May 15, in Montana District Court. Plaintiffs allege that the project approval violates NEPA, NFMA, and the ESA. Specifically, Plaintiffs challenge the USFS's Canada lynx "no effect" determination for the Gallatin Forest Plan Amendment 51 and argue that the agencies should have consulted under the ESA.

*WildEarth Guardians, et al. v. U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), et al.* (D. Mont.) -  
Challenge to Two Oil and Gas Lease Sales

On May 15, environmental Plaintiffs filed a complaint challenging BLM's December 2017 and March 2018 oil and gas lease sales in Montana. Plaintiffs allege that BLM's NEPA analysis did not adequately address groundwater impacts or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change impacts. Two other lawsuits have been filed challenging these lease sales, one in Idaho and one in Montana.

*Center for Biological Diversity v. Zinke and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service* (D.D.C.)

Plaintiff filed this complaint on May 11, alleging that the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) failed to make the requisite 12-month finding in response to a June 26, 2014, petition submitted under the Endangered Species Act, seeking the listing of the San Joaquin Valley giant flower-loving fly. The Service issued its 90-day finding that listing of the fly may be warranted, but has not yet issued the 12-month finding required by the ESA. In response to the Plaintiff's notice of intent to sue submitted on February 22, the Service indicated that it planned to issue the 12-month finding by October 2018. Plaintiff seeks in remedy a court order defining a date certain for completion of the finding.

**SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:**

*Sierra Club v. U.S. DOI and Wilderness Society v. U.S. BLM* (4th Cir.) - Mountain Valley Pipeline Right-Of-Way

Although no decision has yet issued in this case following oral arguments on May 8, two decisions adverse to the federal government issued in related cases. First, in litigation before the DC Circuit challenging the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC's) approval of the Mountain Valley Pipeline, the court denied FERC's request to hold the litigation in abeyance pending FERC's consideration of the petitioners' motions for reconsideration. The court did not address the motions of the litigation. Second, in litigation before the Fourth Circuit regarding the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, the court vacated the US FWS's incidental take statement for failing to quantify the allowed take.

*Upper Skagit Indian Tribe v. Lundgren* (Supreme Court)

On May 21, the United States Supreme Court issued an opinion in the above mentioned case. The Court had granted certiorari from a decision of the Washington Supreme Court holding that pursuant to *County of Yakima v. Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Nation*, 502 U. S. 251 (1992), tribal sovereign immunity does not bar state courts from exercising *in rem* jurisdiction over tribal property. Rejecting the reasoning that the *Yakima* holding was relevant to the scope of tribal sovereign immunity, Justice Gorsuch, writing for the Court, vacated the decision. However, he remanded the case for further proceedings on an alternative theory, not fully briefed before the Court, that common law sovereign immunity does not attach to actions involving "immovable property" located in the territory of another sovereign. Chief Justice Roberts, joined by Justice Kennedy, concurred in the judgment in order to emphasize the need to reexamine the scope of tribal sovereign immunity should the Washington State courts hold that the "immovable property" exception does not apply in the tribal context. Justice Thomas, joined by Justice Alito, dissented, arguing that the Court should have held that the Tribe lacked sovereign immunity pursuant to the immovable property exception and found in favor of Respondents without remanding back to the State courts.

*Desert Survivors, Center for Biological Diversity et al. v. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife* (N.D. Cal.)

On May 15, the court issued its ruling on Plaintiffs' challenge to FWS withdrawal of its proposed rule to list the Bi-State sage grouse DPS as a threatened species. Although, the court had some favorable findings for the U.S., it granted the Plaintiffs' Motion for Summary Judgment and denied the U.S. motion. While the court found the Service arbitrary and capricious relying on Coates Study for population stability, the court upheld FWS assessments on other information relied on for the withdrawal such as the genetic diversity studies, cumulative impacts, and BLM Land Use Plan Amendments. The court ruled FWS can consider future conservation efforts as long as those efforts are sufficiently certain to be implemented and effective. The court upheld the Service's analysis on the PECE regarding the Policy's first prong, certainty of implementation, rejected the FWS analysis regarding the Policy's second prong, certainty of effectiveness. The court found there was no evidence that the planned conservation measures would actually improve the status of the DPS. The court rejected the Plaintiffs' facial challenge regarding FWS interpretation of "range" as "current range". The court faulted FWS interpretation of significant under its SPR policy as impermissible, stating the interpretation was illusory because it requires meeting three criteria that cannot be met all at the same time. The court also ruled against FWS application of "significant" to the DPS again faulting FWS reliance on the Coates Study mentioned above and on its PECE analysis to determine that any of portions of the range would not warrant listing. The parties have 10 days (until May 25,) to submit a proposed schedule for remedy-related briefing.

*Sierra Club, et al. v. National Park Service, et al.* (4<sup>th</sup> Cir; 18-1082); *Defenders of Wildlife, et al. v. Fish and Wildlife Service, et al.* (4<sup>th</sup> Cir.) - Atlantic Coast Pipeline

On May 15, the Fourth Circuit issued a brief per curiam Order vacating the FWS Incidental Take Statement (ITS) because it failed to set clear, enforceable limits on take as required under the ESA. The Order indicates the reasoning will be more fully explained in a forthcoming opinion. Although the legal effect of the Order remains unclear pending the full opinion, as a practical matter, tree clearing activities for the pipeline are currently suspended until August 31, due to time-of-year-restrictions for migratory birds (August 15 in VA) and until November 16 in certain areas for threatened and endangered bat species. Oral argument was held on May 10. Petitioners Sierra Club, et al. assert that the NPS lacked authority to issue the ROW permits and that FWS failed to issue a proper ITS. These are unique matters with direct jurisdiction in the Circuit Court under the Natural Gas Act.

## **OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:**

*UPDATE: Johnson Family Properties II* (OSMRE)

On May 18, Plaintiff M.L. Johnson Family Properties, LLC filed a Notice of Appeal with the Sixth Circuit in the *Johnson Family II* case. On March 21, the Eastern District of Kentucky upheld OSMRE's decision to terminate a cessation order issued to Premier Elkhorn Coal Co. because the coal operator had demonstrated right of entry under section 510(b)(6)(C) of SMCRA. The decision found that, under that provision, Kentucky law governs the right of entry determination in the permit decision process, and that, when the surface estate is owned by several individuals as tenants-in-common, Kentucky law permits a cotenant to consent to surface mining.



*Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Inc. v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (N.D. Ala.)

Plaintiffs filed this complaint September 13, 2017, challenging the Corps' issuance of a Section 404 permit for Black Creek Mine in Jefferson County, Alabama, and its consultation with FWS under the ESA which resulted in a concurrence with the Corps' "not likely to adversely affect" determination for several species. On April 4, the United States responded to Plaintiffs' motion for summary judgment. As to Plaintiffs' claim that the informal consultation process was not completed because FWS's concurrence with the Corps' determination did not specifically mention critical habitat for the species, the United States argued that because FWS did not issue an express nonconcurrence, it clearly intended to concur with the determination, and in any case the inadvertent omission had no substantive impact on the outcome of the consultation.

Plaintiffs' response, filed April 25, was that whether or not the omission was inadvertent, it constituted failure to complete consultation in violation of the ESA. The United States' reply, filed May 16, restates that the absence of a nonconcurrence was sufficient under the ESA, had no substantive impact on the outcome of consultation, and created no prejudicial error. Unless Plaintiffs seek leave to file a surreply, briefing is now complete.

*Turtle Island Restoration Network v. U.S. Dep't of Commerce* (D. Haw.) - Hawaii Long-Line Case

On May 4, the District Court approved a settlement agreement and dismissed this successful challenge to NMFS's regulation of the Hawaii longline swordfish fishery, including the MBTA permit issued by FWS authorizing incidental bycatch of seabirds by the fishery. The agreement simply states that FWS's issuance of the permit was arbitrary and capricious as decided by the Ninth Circuit and so grants declaratory relief to Plaintiffs. NMFS is not expected to reapply for an MBTA permit for this fishery in light of M-37050, which interprets the MBTA to not prohibit incidental take.

*Waldon G. Riggs, et al. v. Acting Pacific Regional Director*

Order Vacating Decision in Part and Remanding, and Dismissing Appeal or Affirming Decision in Remaining Part, issued May 2. Appellants appealed a November 30, 2015, Decision to acquire 17.51 acres in trust for the Sycuan Band of Kumeyaay Nation (Tribe). The Board determined BIA failed to "address the alleged effect of the acquisition on easements to which owners of adjacent or nearby properties claim ownership with the Tribe, or on properties that are burdened by the easements to be acquired in trust" and held: "The Decision fails to address the allegations, reiterated by Appellants on appeal...that the trust acquisition would make the easements less enforceable against others, and unenforceable against the Tribe." Citing a recent remand wherein BIA failed to properly consult (contrary to recommendations by this Office) regarding unrecorded access routes to sacred sites on property to be acquired in trust for a neighboring tribe, *Big Sandy Rancheria v. Acting RD*, the Board directed BIA to address the alleged effect of the trust acquisition on easements held by Appellants. The Board appears to believe the easements are to be acquired in trust, rather than only the underlying property. We are consulting within the Department regarding the request to address how neighboring property owners can enforce easements against the Tribe.

*Juliana v. U.S.* (D. Ore.) - Climate Change

DMR and DLR reviewed and commented on DOJ's draft motion for summary judgment on

May 21. DOJ intends to file it on May 22. Plaintiffs allege that the U.S. is violating their rights to a climate capable of sustaining human life and the public trust doctrine.

*Enrolled Members of the Blackfeet Tribe v. Jewell, et. al.*

The Government filed a new motion to dismiss in the *Enrolled Members of the Blackfeet v. Zinke, et. al.* case to address issues raised in Plaintiffs' motion for leave to file an amended complaint. Plaintiffs are pro se and filed an unopposed motion to amend their complaint on February 14, based on "significant factual and procedural developments that have occurred since the original complaint was filed in October 2015." The court granted Plaintiffs' unopposed motion to amend their complaint on March 5, but as of May 15, Plaintiffs had not filed an amended complaint. The Government, therefore, treated Plaintiffs' motion to amend as their amended complaint and filed a new motion to dismiss. In its motion, the Government argued that Plaintiffs' case should be dismissed because: (1) Plaintiffs lacked standing; (2) the court lacked subject matter jurisdiction; (3) Plaintiffs failed to state a claim upon which relief may be granted; and (4) Plaintiffs failed to join a necessary and indispensable party.

*Navajo Nation v. Zinke* (D. Ariz.) – On Remand

In a case that dates back to 2003, the Navajo Nation (Nation) challenged the Secretary's operations of the Colorado River and alleged breach of trust claims for failure to determine the Nation's reserved rights to the River. The federal district court dismissed the case, but a Ninth Circuit decision remanded the case for the limited purpose of reconsidering the Nation's breach claim after entertaining any request by the Nation to amend that - and only that - claim. On April 13, the Nation filed its proposed Third Amended Complaint, but we believe exceeds the scope of the remand order by relitigating issues resolved by the Ninth Circuit and adding new causes of action. DOJ intends to file a motion in partial opposition, DWR is reviewing a draft response brief, and the filing deadline is May 29. In addition and in response to the Nation's February 2, proposed framework for settlement and discussions, Senior Advisor Alan Mikkelsen sent letters to leadership of both the Nation and the Hopi Tribe on May 11, informing them that the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office would be scheduling meetings with them in the near future.

*Wildlands Defense v. Seesholtz*, (D. Idaho), On Appeal (9th Cir.)

In this case involving a challenge to post-fire rehabilitation and timber sale projects on the Boise National Forest, the plaintiffs filed an emergency motion for injunction pending appeal with the Ninth Circuit on May 18, four days after the district court denied the plaintiffs' request for a stay of his order denying the plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction. Under Ninth Circuit rules, our response to this motion must be filed in 10 days, or on May 29. The court does have discretion to shorten or extend this time period and DOJ expects a scheduling order to be issued immediately.

*Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) v. the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service* (C.D. Cal.)

On March 27, CBD filed a complaint in the Central District of California which alleges that the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) violated section 706(1) of the Administrative Procedure Act by unlawfully or unreasonably delaying compliance with

section 3(d)(1) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA), 16 U.S.C. § 1274(d)(1), by failing to prepare comprehensive resource management plans (CRMP) for certain rivers in California within three full fiscal years of Congress designating them as wild and scenic under the WSRA. Of the eight rivers that are the subject of the complaint, only segments of two of the Rivers are managed by BLM; the remainder are managed by USFS. The US response to the complaint is due on May 30, although the parties are discussing a possible stay of that deadline pending discussions of a possible amicable resolution.

*Uintah County, Utah, et al. v. Zinke, et al. and State of Utah v. Zinke, et al.* (D. Utah) - Wilderness Policy Cases

On May 16, the *State of Utah and Uintah County, et al.* filed a joint motion to supplement and amend their first and second amended complaints, which Plaintiffs filed in August 2013. These cases challenge BLM policies (Sec. Order 3310, BLM IM 2011-154, and BLM Manuals 6310 and 6320) and general management (alleged *de facto* management) relating to lands with wilderness characteristics. Plaintiffs now seek to add allegations and a cause of action relating to the 2017 Settlement Agreement (*SUWA v. DOI* (D. Utah)) for the lawsuit challenging the 2008 Utah RMPs. It is worth noting that the State of Utah and other Utah counties appealed the district court's approval of the 2017 Settlement Agreement to the Tenth Circuit, which has been briefed. Plaintiffs also seek to amend the complaints to remove allegations and causes of action relating to the now rescinded BLM Mineral Leasing Reform policy. Aside from these proposed changes, the complaints largely remain the same. The Department's response to Plaintiffs' motion is due May 31, but we will likely seek an extension of time to file the response.

*In re General Adjudication of All Rights to Use Water in the Little Colorado River System and Source*, Civ. 6417 (Apache County Superior Court) - Navajo Claims

Consistent with a schedule set by the adjudication court, the United States will file an amended statement of claimant as trustee for the Navajo Nation and allottees within the Navajo Reservation on June 1. This amended statement covers water rights claims for: stock ponds; stock and wildlife watering; and domestic, commercial, municipal, and light industrial purposes.

*Ak-Chin Indian Community v. Central Arizona Water Conservation District, United States* (D. Ariz.)

In March 2017, the Ak-Chin Indian Community, in an attempt to settle a longstanding dispute, filed suit against Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD), seeking a preliminary injunction and declaratory judgment that the Community is entitled to an additional 10,000 acre-feet of Colorado River Water, supplied by the Central Arizona Project (CAP), under the Community's 1984 water settlement. Upon motion by CAWCD, which operates and maintains the CAP for the Bureau of Reclamation, the court joined the United States as a necessary party in July 2017. CAWCD later filed a cross-claim against the United States, the U.S. moved to dismiss the cross-claim, and CAWCD filed a response. The court granted the U.S. motion to dismiss on January 12, dismissing CAWCD's cross-claims. After the parties provided court-requested letters regarding likely summary judgment motions in March 2018, and then had further communications, which involved the potential dismissal of the case without resolving the underlying issues, in April the United States requested (with agreement of the other parties) and the court granted 60 days during which the United States will consider whether to file cross-claims against CAWCD. Solicitor's Office staff attorneys provided a general outline to DOJ and

are awaiting a draft of the proposed cross-claims for review. Filing the cross-claims must occur by June 4.

*United States of America (Bureau of Land Management) Claimant/Appellee v. Ron Korman and Maxine Korman, Objectors/Appellants* (Mont. S. Ct.)

Ron and Maxine Korman filed their opening brief with the Montana Supreme Court on May 4, seeking review of the Montana Water Court's decision that they forfeited any water right interest in two reservoirs owned by the BLM and that BLM's wildlife water rights in the reservoirs did not expand BLM's water right appropriation. The United States' brief is due June 5.

*In re General Adjudication of All Rights to Use Water in the Little Colorado River System and Source*, Civ. 6417 (Apache County Superior Court) - Hopi Claims

On April 27, the Little Colorado River Coalition filed motions for partial summary judgment with respect to claims made by the Hopi Tribe regarding priority date and allotments. Because the United States filed related claims as trustee, we will file a response to clarify that: (1) the United States asserts no claims based on state law; (2) priority date issues have been decided at this stage, but can be appealed; and (3) the United States claims water rights on behalf of the trust allotments. Our response is due June 6. If necessary, we will file an amended statement of claimant to clarify our claims on behalf of the allotments.

*Johnson v. United States, et al.* (C.D. Cal.)

Plaintiff filed this action against the United States pursuant to the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) in the District Court for the Central District of California alleging personal injury and property damages which are estimated in the amount of \$7,500,000 arising from a head-on motor vehicle accident involving Plaintiff and Robert Jacobo, the then-director of the Fort Mohave Indian Tribe's WIA (One-Stop) Program. Plaintiff originally filed his Complaint against Mr. Jacobo as the sole Defendant, but filed a Third Amended Complaint pleading in the alternative his theories of liability against the United States as an additional Defendant. In particular, Plaintiff asserts FTCA liability on the basis that the Tribe's WIA (One-Stop) Program is funded, in whole or in part, with federal funding pursuant to Section 166 (Native American Programs) of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and, because WIA programs are required to be administered in a manner consistent with the principles of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA), which provides FTCA coverage with respect to the actions of tribal employees while carrying out a 638 contract while acting within the scope of their employment regardless of the source of funding from which the employee is paid, that Mr. Jacobo was deemed a BIA employee at the time of the incident since he allegedly was acting in the scope and course of his duties as Program Director for the Tribe's WIA (One-Stop) Program. Discovery currently is set to close on August 21, 2018, and trial is set for November 27. The Government's Answer is due June 16.

*Markle Interests, LLC, et al. v. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service* (U.S.)

Petitioners, owners and lessees of land comprising one of the designated critical habitat units for the endangered dusky gopher frog, brought this challenge to the designation, claiming among other things that the area, which is unoccupied by the species, is not essential to the conservation of the species under the section 3(5) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and should have been excluded under Section 4(b)(2). The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana

upheld the designation, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit affirmed, although with a vigorous dissent. On January 22, the Supreme Court granted Petitioners' petitions for certiorari, which argued (1) the unit does not fall within the ESA definition of "critical habitat" and (2) FWS's decision to not exclude the unit from designation under section 4(b)(2) was not judicially unreviewable, and was abuse of FWS's discretion. Petitioners filed their briefs on April 23. The United States' response is due June 29, but DOI staff have already reviewed a first draft brief prepared by DOJ. Another draft will be circulated as the filing date approaches.

*Raven Del Mar, sui juris, v. Yuma House Lower Brule Agency Police BIA* (D.S.D.)

Raven Del Mar has filed a complaint alleging the conversion of property and at civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Ms. Del Mar seeks the return of a replica "Knights Templar" sword she had turned in to the police department in July of 2017 seeking a determination as to whether it was stolen property. Ms. Del Mar reported that she obtained the sword at the Dakota Access Pipeline Protest. The sword is currently secured in an evidence locker. We will work to resolve this matter appropriately.

*Puerto Rico Land and Fruit v. Aquasur Corp.* (D.P.R. 2018)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was named as a third-party defendant in this action that was initiated in the Superior Court of Fajardo, Puerto Rico, First Instance Court. The government removed it to the U.S. District Court. On April 4, the court granted Aquasur's motion to dismiss the third-party complaint against the United States for lack of subject matter jurisdiction because the territorial court lacked jurisdiction over the land interests of the United States when the original complaint was filed. As a result, a minor area of possible encroachment between the land of the FWS and the plaintiff remains unresolved. We believe that Aquasur's survey is unsound and there is no actual encroachment. We are continuing to work with the AUSA and FWS to develop the government's position and case strategy, expecting that a new quiet title complaint will be filed in the district court in the future.

*U.S. v. Nature* (9th Cir.)

This case addresses the NPS's authority to arrest someone for being dangerously drunk in public in the El Portal Administrative Site next to Yosemite National Park. On May 16, the Ninth Circuit heard oral argument on whether NPS rangers had the authority to arrest Mr. Adrian Nature in 2015 for public drunkenness in the parking lot of the El Portal Community Center. El Portal is an administrative site for the park, established by Congress in 1958 so that the NPS could move offices and residences outside of Yosemite Valley. The statute establishing the site directed that the site would "not become part of Yosemite National Park nor be subject to the laws and regulations" governing the park. The statute also directed the Secretary to promulgate such regulations for the site as he deemed necessary. In 1986, NPS adopted, by incorporation, certain regulations from 36 CFR Part 2 for El Portal, including the prohibition on drunkenness. The federal public defender challenged NPS's arrest authority, arguing that El Portal is not a "park area" and that the regulations in Part 2 cannot be incorporated into the special regulations for El Portal. Our briefs explained that the Secretary's decision to adopt a public drunkenness regulation for El Portal was proper because El Portal is a "park area" in that it fulfills both a "park purpose" and an "other purpose" as set forth in 36 CFR 1.6. Moreover, the Secretary's decision to incorporate only certain of the general NPS regulations for El Portal demonstrates a

proper exercise of discretion to determine which regulations were necessary for managing El Portal. The judges seemed skeptical of the public defender's arguments, intimating that if the defendant's arguments were correct, then none of the current regulations for El Portal would be valid.

*Rose d/b/a Yreka Transit Mix v. Pacific Regional Director*

By appeal received March 8, Appellant challenges a lease valuation appraisal and damage assessment for unauthorized gravel crushing operations on an allotment held as an undivided interest with multiple others. Following a previous challenge to a BIA trespass notice, the IBIA affirmed the BIA Notice to Cease and Desist on March 25, 2016, and remanded with directions that BIA determine whether a lease can issue to Mr. Rose. BIA filed the administrative record and declined requests to stay the appeal in order to mediate, given that Mr. Rose continues to violate the previously affirmed Cease and Desist Order and because he recently sought to substitute the Yreka Corporation as a party, which does not appear to be properly registered as a corporation licensed to conduct business in the State of California.

*Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation v. United States, United States Department of the Interior, Ryan Zinke and David Bernhardt*

The District Court for the District of Columbia (DDC) granted the Government's motion for an extension of time to respond to Plaintiff's complaint. The Government's response/answer is now due on August 16.

## **NON-LITIGATION MATTERS:**

### **Bureau of Reclamation and Industrial Hemp**

The Division of Water Resources is finalizing an options paper for the Deputy Secretary's Office outlining options for responding to a grower in Montana, who has requested a water contract from the Bureau of Reclamation. Questions have been raised about the applicability of a 2014 Farm Bill provision on industrial hemp production and an associated Statement of Principles implementing that provision to Reclamation's ability to contract with this grower.

### **Negotiation of Agreement between NPS and the Crow Tribe at Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area (BICA)**

In 1967, NPS and the Crow Tribe entered into a 50-year agreement to extend the boundaries of BICA to encompass tribal lands, including a portion of Ok-A-Beh Road which provides NPS and public access to Bighorn Lake, a concession facility, and a marina. In December 2017, NPS and the Tribe extended the agreement until June 1. Negotiations to further extend the agreement have been unsuccessful. If the agreement lapses, NPS and the public will be unable to access large portions of the park on the Montana side of the recreation area. In addition, NPS would suspend the Crow Tribe's concession contract at the marina because it will be unable to fulfill its management and maintenance duties required by the concession contract.

**Dominion Energy Virginia Final Non-Judicial NRDAR Settlement and Restoration Plan**  
DOI (acting through the USFWS and the NPS), the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia Department of Energy and the Environment have finalized a non-judicial settlement agreement with Dominion Energy Virginia resolving its environmental liability for the release of

mineral oil from its Crystal City Substation located in Arlington, Virginia and have finalized a Restoration Plan selecting the natural resource Trustees' preferred alternative to restore the impacted area. Pursuant to the Settlement Agreement and Restoration Plan, the Trustees will receive \$390,386 to restore wetlands and provide educational signage at the Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary on the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

#### Implementation of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement

Under procedures developed by the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office, DWR provides support in the implementation of this recently enacted settlement, including drafting various documents necessary for the Secretary's execution of the settlement agreement and related documents. As part of this process, (b) (5)

Meanwhile, DWR will provide a draft recommendation from SOL to the Secretary to the Front Office for review and finalization. SIWRO advises that a signing ceremony will be scheduled for mid-June and wants to expedite a final package through SOL and Executive Secretariat for surnaming by all relevant bureaus.

#### OMB Request for Information Regarding Maritime Regulatory Reform

On May 17, the Office of Management and Budget Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs published a request for information "seeking public input on how the Federal government may prudently manage regulatory costs imposed on the maritime sector." 83 FR 22993. The request notes that multiple federal agencies (expressly including DOI) are responsible for different aspects of maritime regulation with potentially redundant or inconsistent results, and "seeks public comment on how existing agency requirements affecting the maritime sector can be modified or repealed to increase efficiency, reduce or eliminate unnecessary or unjustified regulatory burdens, or simplify regulatory compliance while continuing to meet statutory missions" in order "to inform agencies' development of regulatory reform proposals." DMR was notified of this publication by BSEE staff, who learned of it from Coast Guard staff.

#### 5-Year Program - Deputy Secretary/ASLMM Briefing

On May 18, BOEM and DMR briefed the Deputy Secretary and the ASLMM on the 5 Year Program and the analyses/determinations to be made at this stage of the process (i.e., Proposed Program). The briefing focused on potential options the Secretary may want to consider at this stage of the process. A briefing to the Secretary is expected after May 29.

#### Legislative Proposals for BLM

Last week, DMR helped BLM brief Kate MacGregor on its three draft proposed bills requested by the House Natural Resources Committee. The proposals would (1) expand on the categorical exclusions in section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, (2) impose cost recovery for protests, and (3) streamline processing of applications for permits to drill, and limit consultations. After the briefing, DMR re-drafted the third proposal to reflect Ms. MacGregor's views, and circulated the revised draft to OCL.

#### BOEM Gulf of Mexico ESA Consultation

DMR attorneys attended a call with DOJ, NOAA, and EPA on the timeline for completion of the ESA Section 7 consultation for OCS oil and gas activities in the Gulf of Mexico. NOAA indicated that they have completed a draft biological opinion, but have not provided a timeline for when they will share the draft with the federal action agencies and allow those agencies to begin their review. The NRDC settlement stay will expire in November 2018, and NOAA had committed to issuing the biological opinion by that date. Delay by NOAA in sharing drafts with the action agencies could adversely affect not only DOI's work on Gulf oil and gas activities, but EPA's issuance of the general NPDES permit critical to oil and gas activities. With that in mind and in hopes of trying to stay on schedule, we have been working with BOEM staff to elevate the matter and have requested DOI management to approach NOAA about obtaining a copy of the draft to begin review of the document. DMR is preparing a briefing for SOL management on this issue.

#### Interior Business Center (IBC) Successfully Awards Three Contracts to Support DOD's Military Family Life Counseling Program

For the past decade, IBC has been awarding and administering contracts for DOD that provide family life counseling services to military personnel and their families worldwide. On May 17, the current re-competition round concluded with the awards of three indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity contracts with a combined value of \$4.3B. These contracts will support the military counseling effort for the next 10 years and, with the help of SOL, are designed to build upon the things that have worked well in the past while mitigating observed risks. We have supported this acquisition from the earliest planning stages through many difficult reviews and issues and will continue to support the effort as it moves from acquisition to contract administration.

#### Request for Information Body Worn Cameras for NPS

NPS submitted for our review a Request for Information (RFI) about an enterprise, end-to-end, turn-key, body-worn camera (BWC) and digital evidence storage solution. NPS's initial market research identified one vendor capable of providing this solution, and NPS intends to award a sole-source procurement unless other qualified vendors are located. The RFI purportedly serves the purpose of attempting to locate additional qualified vendors. FedRAMP is a government-wide program that provides a standardized approach to security assessment, authorization, and continuous monitoring for cloud products. FedRAMP compliance is mandatory as this is a cloud-based solution. During review of the RFI, we expressed concerns about the wording of the requirements section as well as a possible relationship between the evidently only (now) qualified vendor and NPS personnel. We have provided edits and comments in an effort to open up potential competitors.

#### ShakeAlert Proceedings

We have reviewed and revised a proposed "Trademark Coexistence Agreement" from the Canadian company, Weir-Jones, that uses and has attempted to register USGS's marquee program titled *ShakeAlert*.

#### Review of a Publishing Agreement for a Book Chapter Published in Spain

We have reviewed and edited a publishing agreement for a book chapter authored by a USGS employee that is being printed in Spain.



#### First Amendment Permit Application of Proud Boys New England

Boston National Historical Park received an application for a First Amendment demonstration from Proud Boys New England, a men's organization that is self-described as "Western chauvinist" who "refuse to apologize for creating the modern world." The Proud Boys plan to conduct their event on August 19, at the Bunker Hill Monument. As part of its application, the Proud Boys requested to use a public address system to broadcast its message and conduct an open-mic session. The Proud Boys demonstrated on the Boston Common previously (as well as at Minute Man NHP last month without incident, possibly due in part to a Nor'easter limiting park visitation), and expects counter-protests to again occur. We are advising the NPS on appropriate permit conditions that will enable the Proud Boys to engage in first amendment activity while not interfering with park activities. The head of the group, John Medlar, has raised questions about a permit provision banning face masks during the demonstration (in accordance with Massachusetts law), expressing concern of retaliation against those who may want to protect their identity. We have advised the park to assure Mr. Medlar that counter-protesters will be subject to the same restriction and equal enforcement of the law. Park law enforcement is coordinating with the Boston Police Department.

#### Tippecanoe Darter Species 12-Month Finding

The Boston Solicitor's Office has reviewed the 12-month Finding on a Petition to List the Tippecanoe Darter. The Species Assessment and accompanying SSA concluded that listing was not warranted.

#### North Allegheny Wind HCP, EA, & Federal Register Surname

The Boston Solicitor's Office has reviewed, submitted comments on, and surnamed a draft HCP, EA & Federal Register notice package for FWS Region 5 - in coordination with the PA Field Office. The applicant applied for an ITP to cover the incidental take of Indiana bats after the carcass of one individual was discovered at the existing wind energy project in 2011. The HCP contemplates a 25-year ITP and anticipates the take of 4 bats during that period (and a lost reproductive potential of 3.5 bats under the REA model). Our office has identified concerns with the funding section of the HCP, and suggested that the Service provide additional explanation and analysis in the mitigation, changed circumstances, and adaptive management sections. We have also strongly recommended that the Service perform an additional alternative analysis for an operating speed between 5.0 and 6.9 m/s in the EA. Moreover, we have provided suggested changes to, and advised on the consequences of, a technical assistance letter that the Service intends to issue to the applicant in advance of ITP issuance.

#### Skutik & St. Croix River Statement of Cooperation

The Boston Solicitor's Office has reviewed a Skutik River Statement of Cooperation with signatories from the Peskotomuhkati Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, National Marine Fisheries Service, EPA, BIA, FWS, Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) Canada, and Environment and Climate Change Canada. The renewed statement of cooperation brings Canadian Federal Departments (DFO Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada) into the agreement (first signed in 2013) and reiterates the parties' "mutual objective to cooperate in the restoration of indigenous, sea-run fish, the watershed and the ecosystem they support in the Skutik / St. Croix River."

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On May 29, Susan Combs, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, exercising the authority of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, will be on annual leave. From May 30-June 1, she will be in the office.

From May 29-June 1, Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith and Deputy Assistant Secretary Ryan Hambleton will be in the office.

From May 29-30 and June 1, NPS Deputy Director Dan Smith, exercising the authority of the Director, will be in the office. On May 31, he will attend the American Battlefield Trust annual conference in Newport News, Virginia.

From May 29-31, FWS Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan will be in the office. On June 1, he will be on annual leave.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On May 31, FWS Deputy Director Jim Kurth will attend and speak at the Partners Outdoors Annual Conference and present the Partners Outdoors Legends Award. The meeting will take place at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The conference program will be a joint undertaking of private-sector interests, coordinated through the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, federal agency representatives coordinated through the Federal Recreation Council, and state park agencies coordinated through the National Association of State Park Directors. (05/23/2018)

By the end of May, FWS will make the final Recovery Plan Supplement for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) Distinct Population Segment of grizzly bears publicly available. As part of a 1997 court settlement on a lawsuit related to the 1993 Recovery Plan, FWS is required to complete habitat-based recovery criteria for each ecosystem prior to any proposal to delist bears under the ESA within that ecosystem. The Recovery Plan Supplement only applies to federal lands within the NCDE grizzly bear recovery zone. The criteria are discrete, measurable and unique to the ecosystem, supported by the best available science, and are directly related to grizzly bear population health. The criteria were initially developed in concert with state and federal partners in the draft 2013 Conservation Strategy. Outreach will include posting the final recovery plan supplement to the Region 6 website, announcing its availability via a news release and phone calls or emails to Congress, states, tribes, federal partners, and other key stakeholders. (05/23/2018)

In late May, pending DOI approval, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a Notice of Availability (NOA) of Kauai Island Utility Cooperative's application for renewal of its incidental

take permit under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA. The proposed permit renewal application is associated with a short-term habitat conservation plan that addresses incidental take of three listed species caused by the operation and maintenance of the applicant's existing and anticipated new construction electrical utility facilities on Kauai, Hawaii. The applicant is requesting renewal of the permit to authorize incidental take of the federally endangered Hawaiian petrel, the federally endangered Hawaiian band-rumped storm-petrel and the federally threatened Newell's shearwater. When the NOA publishes, outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, an information bulletin and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, and targeted stakeholder outreach. This is controversial. (05/23/2018)

## UPDATED ITEMS

On or around May 30, FWS will publish a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2019-20 hunting season. This is the first step in the annual regulatory cycle. The FWS Regulations Committee will recommend the final frameworks at their October meeting. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (Updated 05/23/2018)

In late May, FWS and NOAA Fisheries plan to propose revisions to the regulations pertaining to interagency cooperation pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 402) and the procedures for listing of species and designation of critical habitat pursuant to section 4 of the Act (50 CFR 424). FWS will also propose to end the use of the 'blanket' 4(d) rule for newly listed threatened species (50 CFR 17) to recognize the difference between endangered and threatened species and align with NOAA Fisheries' current practice. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. The rules are currently undergoing interagency review through OMB-OIRA. (Updated 05/23/2018)

In late May, pending DOI clearance, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to delist the Hidden Lake bluecurls, a plant in California, due to recovery. FWS does not expect opposition to the delisting. Primary stakeholders include California Department of Parks and Recreation Mount San Jacinto State Park. Planned outreach will include a national news release and notifications to stakeholders and members of Congress. (Updated 05/16/2018)

## ONGOING ITEMS

From May 29-31, 13 Hispanic Access Foundation (HAF) interns will be attending orientation in DC to prepare for their summer positions with FWS in the Northeast Region, Midwest Region and HQ. The Hispanic Access Foundation is a non-profit organization that helps connect Hispanic communities with civic engagement. FWS is working with HAF to employ Hispanic youth through internships. (05/09/2018)

On May 30, FWS will present the 2018 FWS National Military Partners Conservation Award to the Florida National Guard's Joint Training Center at Camp Blanding in Starke, Florida. This is open press, and a news release is planned. (05/16/2018)

In late May, FWS is providing for public inspection the final supplemental environmental impact statement on the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's request to amend its 2010 Forested State Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and incidental take permit. The amendment would authorize additional incidental take of the threatened grizzly bear, Canada lynx, bull trout and unlisted westslope cutthroat trout associated with forest management on 81,416 acres proposed to be added to the HCP. Outreach is planned and includes a regional news release and congressional/stakeholder notifications. (05/09/2018)

On June 1 and 2, representatives from FWS, U.S. Forest Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and other partners will celebrate the proposal to delist Kirtland's warbler. The current Kirtland's warbler population is estimated to be over 2,000 pairs, more than double the recovery goal. The Kirtland's warbler population continues to grow and has exceeded recovery goals for the past 16 years. FWS proposed delisting the warbler on April 11 and is accepting comments through July 11. (04/25/2018)

On or around June 1, FWS plans to publish in the *Federal Register* the final 2018-19 hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds. FWS annually prescribes frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the number of birds that may be taken and possessed in hunting seasons. These frameworks are necessary to allow state selections of seasons and limits and to allow recreational harvest at levels compatible with population and habitat conditions. Planned outreach includes congressional and stakeholder notifications. No news release is planned. Responsive talking points will be available for if asked questions. (04/11/2018)

On or around June 1, FWS anticipates the draft supplemental environmental impact statement for expanded public access to Rattlesnake Mountain on Hanford Reach National Monument, in Washington State, will be available for public review and comment. This is part of the required regulatory processes to provide public access to Rattlesnake Mountain, consistent with a mandate in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to provide public access to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain for educational, recreational, historical, scientific, cultural, and other purposes, including motor vehicle and pedestrian and other non-motorized access. FWS established a tribal working group with four local tribes and held public scoping meetings to address cultural concerns and to work through the process of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. FWS is addressing National Environmental Policy Act compliance by drafting a supplement to the 2008 Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Monument. Expanded public access will be controversial with tribes. FWS will continue outreach efforts to the tribes, media, and the public. A local news release is planned to alert the public that comment period is open. (Updated 03/28/2018)

On or around June 1, pending approval by the Department, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice of intent to prepare a draft programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) addressing the potential impacts from four similar wind energy project habitat

conservation plans in Hawaii. The HCPs were submitted to the Service in support of requests for permits authorizing the take of endangered or threatened species, under the Endangered Species Act. Due to similarities in the geography, impact, covered species and proposed mitigation measures between these four wind energy projects the Service has determined that a combined PEIS is the most efficient and comprehensive approach for considering the cumulative impacts of these actions on the human environment. When the PEIS publishes, outreach is planned to include local public notifications through the web and social media, and notifications to members of Congress in Hawaii, with targeted stakeholder outreach. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around June 8, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on the proposal to list five Sri Lankan tarantula species as endangered. The species are in decline due to ongoing habitat loss and degradation, and the cumulative effects of these and other threats. This action is not expected to be controversial. Planned outreach will include web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

### National Park Service

#### **NEW ITEMS**

Between May 28-June 1, Catoctin Mountain Park will conduct additional prescribed burns. Prescribed burns are planned for a total of 18 acres of park land. On May 2, eight acres were successfully burned. The fires are intended to promote the growth of native plant and tree species and limit the threat of wildfires by reducing leaf litter and downed limbs. Limited trail closures will be in effect for short periods of time, and the impact on park visitors and neighbors will be minor. (5/23/2018)

During the week of May 28, the park will request a briefing with the DOI Review Team for the Big Cypress National Preserve Backcountry Access Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), as outlined in the DOI NEPA Document Clearance Process. The purpose of this draft Plan/EIS is to provide management guidelines for backcountry access and use while protecting the Preserve's natural and cultural resources and providing for public enjoyment. The draft Plan/EIS includes a wilderness study that determines what parts of the Original Preserve should be proposed for wilderness designation. (5/23/2018).

On May 29, Big Bend National Park plans to release the Trespass Livestock Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) for a 30-day public review. The NPS developed the plan to guide management for illegal domestic livestock. The EA includes both programmatic and site-specific analyses to capture, hold and transport/transfer livestock. The NPS preferred alternative is to live-capture the horses, cattle and burros, temporarily hold them in NPS corrals, then transport/transfer them to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Capture methods include mounted wrangler roundup, helicopter-assisted roundup, corral trapping with bait, and minor strategic exclusionary fencing. No lethal means are proposed. Outreach for scoping included newsletters, press releases and public meetings. The plan and EA were prepared with participation of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). (5/23/2018)

On May 30, the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commissioners will informally tour Independence National Historical Park. The formal kick-off event that was originally scheduled for this day has been postponed until the fall. (5/23/2018).

On June 1, Yosemite National Park expects to sign a General Agreement with the American Indian Council of Mariposa County, Inc. (a.k.a. The Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation) regarding operation of the Indian Cultural Center. Construction has begun on the center in Yosemite Valley and will include a roundhouse, sweathouse, and Bark house when completed. Tribal members will conduct ceremonies, festivals, and training and will work with the park on building management, parking, and other operational components. The site is located in the same location of the previous Indian Village constructed by the National Park Service. (5/23/2018).

On June 8, soldiers from the South Dakota National Guard will arrive in Wind Cave National Park to prepare to upgrade a mile of an existing road. The road leads to the recently acquired Sanson Ranch property. The Guard will be headquartered in the park while working outside the park on this approach road. A groundbreaking ceremony is planned for June 10, with Brigadier General Tom Croymans from the Guard attending. This road building exercise is scheduled to be completed by June 21. (5/23/2018).

By June 8, the National Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Program (NAGPRA) will announce the apportionment of \$1,638,265.00 in grants to fund over approximately 20 consultation and repatriation projects. The grants will be awarded based on the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, enacted as Public Law 115-141, and pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Public Law 101-601, 25 U.S.C. 3001, which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to award grants to assist in implementing provisions of NAGPRA. (5/23/2018).

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

***(Close Hold)*** Around May 29, Everglades National Park (EVER) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will publicly announce the expansion of the program to allow FWC contractors to remove pythons in the park. The expansion will permit new methods and increased number of personnel to be involved in the program, who will be authorized to use firearms in the park under restrictions. It is expected to take additional weeks beyond that to complete related agreements, planning, contracts, and training before the expansion can be implemented. While hunting remains prohibited by law in EVER, expansion of this program is expected to be welcomed by some citizens. This announcement follows the completed May 1 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance on an expansion of its longstanding Python Removal Authorized Agent Program. On May 8, Superintendent Pedro Ramos met with Reps. Curbello, Ros-Lehtinen and Rooney in Washington, DC, to discuss this among other issues. (Updated 5/23/2018).

On June 1, construction crews will begin temporary stabilization repairs on Arlington Memorial Bridge. The project start was delayed to accommodate the Rolling Thunder special event over Memorial Day weekend. This repair work is designed to keep the bridge open during its full rehabilitation (beginning in fall 2018). Work crews will repair bridge deck supports in the

drawbridge span and the road deck in the westbound roadway. This work will require intermittent single or double lane closures on the bridge beginning after Memorial Day weekend. In early June, or as soon as the District of Columbia issues the required permits, crews will set up staging areas for construction equipment south of Memorial Circle and on the west shore of the Potomac River. For short periods of time, one lane of the George Washington Memorial Parkway may be closed and traffic stopped on the Mount Vernon Trail to set up the staging areas. The NPS is working with the Federal Highway Administration's contractor on a communications plan for the full rehabilitation project, but not one specifically for these temporary stabilization repairs since public impacts are consistent with what people have experienced on and off since 2015. The NPS will send a news release, pending DOI approval, announcing the summer work. (Updated 05/23/2018)

On June 4, contractor bids are due to rebuild the Sperry Chalet. On May 14, the Intermountain Regional Director signed the FONSI for the Sperry Chalet Next 100 years EA and announced a solicitation to contractors for bidding on the first phase of work set to begin summer 2018. The NPS will rebuild the Sperry Chalet Dormitory Building, which burned in the 2017 Sprague Fire, at its original site within the original stone masonry walls. Critical updates will include meeting current building codes where applicable, and improvements to life safety features such as seismic bracing and fire resistant materials. The visitor experience will be very similar to what it has been for decades by using as much of the remaining historic fabric, and replicating historic finishes where practicable. Construction will be completed in two phases, proposed for the summers of 2018 and 2019. Cost considerations and other unforeseen events or other conditions could affect the construction schedule. The park received 72 comment letters during the EA review period; 58 supported the park's preferred alternative. One supported rebuilding the chalet in an alternate location, and six supported the No Action alternative. Seven letters contained substantive comments that were responded to in the FONSI. (Updated 5/23/2018).

By June 8, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a competitive business opportunity to establish a waterfront community center at the Fort Baker Historic Boat Shop and Marina as an affordable recreational and gathering place. The purpose of the RFQ is to identify both private- and public-sector entities interested in operating the facility, which is currently operated by the U.S. Air Force as a military recreation facility open to the public. The NPS is seeking a long-term lease that will enable an offeror to make necessary investments in historic rehabilitation of deteriorating facilities, and the provision of public services and programs at the site. The park has kept the USAF informed throughout the lead up to this announcement, and they have express interest in participating in the RFQ process. (Updated 5/23/2018).

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On or after May 28, the Tule Lake Unit of the WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument will open a 30-day public comment period on the Tule Lake Jail Restoration Project Environmental Assessment. The proposed action would fully restore the exterior of the building, remove the freestanding shed and chain-link fence, restore or rehabilitate the jail interior, and would also improve accessibility to and within the building. (05/02/2018)

On or after May 29, the NPS will release the Tule Lake Unit of World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the public. The FWS co-manages two of three parcels that comprise the Tule Lake Unit, and the FWS has concurred with issuing the FONSI. The selected action outlines the long-term management and development for the unit established in May 2008 by President Bush. (04/25/2018)

By June 1, pending additional changes and corrections to contract language, the NPS expects review of the Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Cruise Ship Prospectus by the WASO SOL office to be completed. The NPS will then release a prospectus for five concession contracts to provide cruise ship services at Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Two of the contracts are set aside for the two historic operators identified through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) legislation. Cruise ship services contracts have been awarded since 1980 on a 10 year basis. New contract terms are similar to previous contracts, shaped in accordance with both Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve-specific legislation and NPS law and policy. Contracts will be awarded by late October, 2019. (Updated 5/16/2018)

Between June 1-30, construction on Maryland's Purple Line will begin with installing temporary bridge structures along the Baltimore-Washington Parkway during light rail construction. Permitting for the project is in final review. These bridges will span all northbound and southbound lanes on the parkway while existing bridges are extended over the rail line during the next 18 months. (5/16/2018)

On or before June 1, the Missouri Department of Agriculture will issue its findings relative to the improper use of herbicides by a private contractor to the NPS on NPS lands at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. The over application occurred in the Summer and Fall of 2016 and its effect became evident in the Spring of 2017. Some 170 trees show signs of mortality and stress. The contractor has been cooperative to date and has indicated willingness to make restitution for damages. The NPS is working to evaluate the best approach to restore resources. (Updated 05/02/2018)

By June 1, Denali National Park and Preserve will publish the Denali Long Range Transportation Plan. The plan evaluates the current conditions of transportation, considers possible future scenarios, and presents future desired conditions and possible funding strategies. It is a document that presents the park's vision for the next 20 years as it evaluates multiple aspects of the its transportation system ranging from bus transit to airstrips and trail connectivity, with particular attention given to the Denali Park Road. (5/9/2018)

Between June 1-15, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (pending Departmental approval of NOA) expects to issue a Record of Decision for the Vista Grande Drainage Basin Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report /Environmental Impact Statement prepared in cooperation with the City of Daly City, California. This project would allow Daly City to take project actions at Fort Funston to address storm-related flooding in the Vista Grande Drainage Basin. [PEPC link](#) (04/04/18).



On June 1, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will implement a new \$10 permit fee for anchoring vessels overnight in Aquatic Park Cove. The permit process will use Recreation.gov, and will provide boaters an additional convenient way to obtain information about anchoring-out rules and regulations, and reserve a mooring in advance of their visit to the park. The implementation had been delayed due to complications involving a criminal case against a local mariner. (5/9/2018)

Between June 4-11, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to release a prospectus for a new concession contract to provide food and beverage services to the public under a concession contract at Stinson Beach. The contract would also authorize equipment rental and convenience item sales. The 10-year contract is set to begin in March 2019. The existing concessioner is a “Preferred Offeror” who is eligible to exercise a right of preference to the award of the new contract. (05/16/2018).

On June 4, Yosemite National Park will close its public scoping period for the Big Oak Flat Visitor Contact Station and Emergency Services Facilities Project. The purpose of this project is to improve the overall visitor experience, improve restroom facilities to reduce wait times, parking facilities, and visitor safety and wayfinding signage. It will also increase accessibility and correct long-standing building maintenance issues. (5/9/2018)

On June 4, the opening ceremony for the Ocean Plastics Lab (OPL) will occur on the National Mall. This exhibit will be on display through June 17 and is an international traveling exhibit by the European Commission, KDM/German Marine Research Consortium (Konsortium Deutsche Meeresforschung), and other partners, which communicates the role of science in solving problems with plastic debris in the ocean. The German Embassy and NOAA are coordinating the event. (5/16/2018).

On June 6, Death Valley National Park will hold a reopening and ribbon-cutting event to celebrate the completion of the Dantes View rehabilitation project. The Fund for People in Parks and Death Valley Natural History Association donated \$273,000 (about half of the construction cost). Dantes View is an extremely popular public viewpoint that provides a panoramic view of most of the park. This project corrects significant safety and accessibility problems. (Updated 05/16/2018).

On June 7, the 30-day public scoping period for an Invasive Vegetation Management Plan/Environmental Assessment at Grand Teton National Park will close. The purpose of the planning effort is to develop a successful strategy to prevent additional establishment and spread of invasive plant species and to restore native plant communities through prevention, control and restoration. (5/9/2018)

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## UPDATED ITEMS

None to report.

## ONGOING ITEMS

On June 14, the Federal Trustees of the Deepwater Horizon (DWH) Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Trustee Council will meet to discuss a variety of issues, including Monitoring and Adaptive Management (philosophy and process), responsibilities of Federal lead, streamlining NEPA and other environmental compliance and Trustee Council programmatic update. The meeting will be held in the Main Interior Building in Washington, DC. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 14, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the Colorado butterfly plant due to recovery. This species is located in Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming. This action is not expected to be opposed. Outreach plans include a national news release and an if-asked FAQ. Key stakeholders include private landowners, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and BLM. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS will announce the approval of nearly \$3.8 million in grants for 28 projects throughout the Americas as part of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant program. Exact date and award amount are not yet determined. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final action designating critical habitat for three plant species on Hawaii island and is correcting the maps for existing designations for an additional four species. FWS intends to exclude lands owned or managed by the Queen Liliuokalani Trust, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and other private landowners under 4(b)(2) of the Act. This action is not controversial. Interested stakeholders include the state of Hawaii and multiple state agencies, the county of Hawaii and various private landowners. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders mentioned above. (Updated 04/18/2018)

In response to a petition to delist the species, on or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to reclassify the American burying beetle from an endangered species to a threatened species. While the primary threats to the species have been ameliorated, ongoing threats remain. FWS will also propose a rule under section 4(d) tailoring prohibitions to those most likely to harm the American burying beetle and its habitats. The American burying beetle currently occurs in Arkansas, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota and Texas. This finding will likely be opposed by the Center for Biological Diversity and Center for American Burying Beetle Conservation. It is also likely to be opposed by the petitioners, American Stewards of Liberty, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Dr. Steven W. Carothers, as they petitioned us

to delist, not downlist the species. Outreach plans include a regional news release and congressional notifications. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed rule to list the hyacinth macaw as threatened. To address concerns raised by the pet trade industry, FWS is including a 4(d) rule that will allow for the import and export of parrots that meet certain criteria, as well as interstate commerce in this species without a permit. Stakeholders include the bird breeding community, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, and World Wildlife Fund. Planned outreach will include a national news release and web updates. (Updated 05/02/2018)

On or around June 21, pending approval by the Department, FWS expects to send to the *Federal Register* a notice of availability of a draft environmental assessment (EA) associated with the potential issuance of an eagle take permit to Horse Butte Wind I, LLC in Bonneville County, in eastern Idaho. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668a-d; BGEPA) allows FWS to authorize the take of bald and golden eagles if that take is incidental to actions that are otherwise lawful. FWS will be seeking public review and comments on the draft EA. No issues have arisen that suggest that our permit decision in this case is controversial or will cause conflict. No outreach is planned. (05/23/2018)

On or around June 22, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposed revision of the existing non-essential experimental population (NEP) designation of red wolves in North Carolina under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act. FWS anticipates opposition from North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), which has officially requested the termination of this NEP, the North Carolina Farm Bureau, and most private landowners with wolves using their property. Although national and local environmental groups will support the continuation of a NEP in North Carolina, they will likely oppose any alternative short of full protections under the Act and the proposed reduction in the size of the NEP. Interested stakeholders other than NCWRC include Defenders of Wildlife, the Red Wolf Coalition, Red Wolf Species Survival Plan cooperators, and other non-governmental organizations that support red wolf conservation. Some of these stakeholders have challenged the current red wolf program in court, and it is important to our defense of that case that we meet the target *Federal Register* date with this notice, as it will support an argument that the actions being challenged are about to be mooted out by this action. Outreach includes a news release, social media, emails and phone calls. (05/09/2018)

On June 29, FWS will hold the First Day of Sale ceremony for the 2018-2019 Federal and Junior Duck Stamps at Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World in Hanover, Md. The event begins at 11 a.m. and is free and open to the public. Both the Federal and Junior Duck Stamp artists will be available to sign stamps, and the U.S. Postal Service will have a special cancellation for collectors. Planned outreach includes a national news release, emails and phone calls to congressional offices and stakeholders. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 29, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final listing determination for the meltwater lednian stonefly and the western glacier stonefly, located in Montana and Wyoming. Interested stakeholders include WildEarth Guardians, Xerces Society, Center for

Biological Diversity and the states of Montana and Wyoming. The State of Wyoming has expressed opposition to the listing. Planned outreach will include a regional news release, web updates, and congressional/stakeholder notifications. (Updated 05/09/2018)

On or around June 29, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the running buffalo clover, located in Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Outreach plans include a news release, social media, fact sheet, and FAQs. Stakeholders include members of Congress and recovery partners including state agencies in the range states. (05/16/2018)

On or around June 29, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to designate a nonessential experimental population of the California condor in northern California and Oregon to contribute to meeting recovery goals for the species. This action is being taken in concert with the National Park Service and the Yurok Tribe in support of recovery goals for the condor. The primary state agencies, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and California Department of Parks and Recreation, have expressed interest in condor recovery through participation in an MOU. There is a possibility that there may be some localized opposition to condor reintroduction in the area, but we do not foresee concerted opposition given California's action banning the use of lead ammunition effective in 2019. FWS is considering how to address potential conflicts with logging, transmission lines and wind turbines through the 10(j) rule. Planned outreach will include a regional news release and notification to stakeholders, tribes and members of Congress. Target date for submitting to the *Federal Register* is June 29, 2018. (05/09/2018)

On or around June 30, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed reclassification of the southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou (endangered) by defining the entire Southern Mountain Caribou population as a distinct population segment (DPS) and listing it as endangered. In 2012, FWS designated critical habitat for the southern Selkirk Mountains population, which will remain unchanged. Several non-governmental organizations (International Fund for Wildlife, Kettle Range Conservation Group, Selkirk Conservation Alliance, Kootenai Environmental Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity, Idaho Conservation League) will likely view our final determination favorably. The Pacific Legal Foundation (and Bonner County as represented by PLF) is likely to challenge the determination. Idaho may view the listing of the DPS and endangered determination unfavorably. Outreach includes a regional news release, social media, emails and phone calls. (05/16/2018)

On or around July 1, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* 90-day findings on petitions to list the Dixie Valley toad and Oregon vesper sparrow, and delist the western distinct population segment (DPS) of the yellow-billed cuckoo. These findings are the first step in a longer process and tend not to get significant media attention; however, for substantial 90-day findings, this action might be the first time stakeholders become aware that FWS is assessing the status of a species. The finding on the petition to delist the western DPS of the yellow-billed cuckoo will receive attention from numerous stakeholders including the petitioners and plaintiffs that have filed a notice of intent to sue FWS for failure to designate critical habitat for the species. All

stakeholders will have ample opportunity to provide input into our eventual 12-month findings. A national news bulletin and congressional notifications are planned. (05/16/2018)

### National Park Service

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On June 14 and 15, District Department of Transportation (DDOT) will host a groundbreaking ceremony for the Metropolitan Branch Trail in the Fort Totten area of Rock Creek Park. District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser will attend. More information will follow after the park receives a permit application from DDOT. (5/23/2018)

On or about June 18, Rocky Mountain National Park will release for a 30-day public review period the Fall River Entrance Improvements Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA provides a no-action alternative and three action alternatives to address congestion at the entrance and related impacts on visitors and neighboring businesses, staff and visitor safety issues, as well as other operational concerns. The proposed action and preferred alternative is to replace the outdated entrance stations and associated buildings in their current location, and install a new fast-pass lane. (5/23/2018).

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **ONGOING**

On June 13, Channel Islands National Park anticipates issuing a joint news release with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians announcing the transfer of human remains to the tribe that have been undergoing Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) review under 43 CFR 10.7 (Disposition of unclaimed human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony). **(Embargoed until public announcement)** (5/9/2018)

On June 15, Yosemite National Park's Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias will reopen to the public, following a 3-year \$40 million project funded through the NPS and Yosemite Conservancy matching funds. A new parking lot and welcome center has been constructed at the South Entrance, a shuttle bus will take visitors to the big trees, a handicap accessible boardwalk has been constructed, trails have been improved, and new restrooms have been installed. The dedication ceremony to mark the completion of the project is slated for June 14.

<https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/mariposagrove.htm> (03/07/2018)

On June 18, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park will host King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain for a tour of Mission San Jose. The City of San Antonio Office of International Relations is coordinating the park tour as part of a three-day visit by the royal family to commemorate the Tri-centennial of the founding of San Antonio, Texas, as a Spanish mission in 1718. A public announcement about the visit will be made at a later date. Park employees involved in the planning effort have signed a modified confidentiality agreement (reviewed by

our solicitor) with the City of San Antonio to coordinate planning efforts and keep the visit confidential. (*Close Hold*) (05/02/2018)

On June 26, the Acadia National Park Draft Transportation Plan and EIS public comment period will close. The comment period is open concurrently with the published EPA Notice of Availability. Public comment will be received through the PEPC website, standard mail, and during Open House events. Press interest in this public comment period is expected to be very high. The communication plan has been shared with NPS Comms. (05/02/2018)

Until June 30, State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices may apply for the remaining funding from the FY 2018 Annual HPF grants that is noticed on Grants.gov. (Updated 5/9/2018)

July 3 is the deadline for the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to submit a nomination to the Keeper of the Ch'u'itnu Historic District Traditional Cultural Property nomination submitted by the Native Village of Tyonek (NVT). On April 4, 2018, the Alaska Historical Commission (Commission) approved the nomination submitted by the NVT, a federally recognized tribe that has lived within the proposed district for many generations. The District encompasses ca. 109,000 acres of land within Alaska's Ch'u'tnu River watershed approximately 90 miles west of Anchorage. The nomination is opposed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources as well as some private organizations/commercial entities. An accord can only be submitted to the Keeper by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and only after it has been reviewed by the Alaska Historical Commission. It is the Keeper's understanding that despite approval of the nomination by the Commission, the SHPO remains strongly opposed to it. Failure of the SHPO to meet the 90 day/ July 3 deadline will likely result in the filing of a third appeal by NVT directly to the Keeper to review the nomination and list the property in the NR. (04/18/18)

By July 15, Olympic National Park's 2017 Natural Resource Condition Assessment (NRCA) will be published as a National Park Service Resource Report. This report is jointly funded by the USGS and the NPS NRCA Program. A joint NPS-USGS news release will be issued announcing the report. (Updated 5/2/2018)

Between July 19-31, the American Indian Movement (AIM) will hold its 27th annual Sundance at Pipestone National Monument. The Sundance is the central sacred ceremony for the Lakota Tribes. On April 2, the NPS received a proposal from AIM to improve the grounds used for the Sundance. The NPS began working through the compliance process for the proposed improvements and has introduced possible alternatives to meet AIM's needs. (Updated 04/11/18).

By July 30, Death Valley National Park anticipates releasing the final Scotty's Castle Flood Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment and FONSI. This document analyzes repair work planned for historic structures, the cultural landscape, utilities, parking, and walkways to recover from damage from a flash flood in October 2015. The historic district is scheduled to reopen to the public in 2020. [PEPC link](#) (Updated 5/9/2018)

In August, at Death Valley National Park, reconstruction work is scheduled to start and be completed by May 2019 that will allow reopening of the northeast entrance to the park and restore public access to Scotty's Castle after massive damage from flooding in October 2015. Construction dates will be confirmed after release of the final Bonnie Clare Road Reconstruction Environmental Assessment and FONSI. (Updated 5/9/2018)

## **Awareness**

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On May 18, FWS published a draft environmental assessment (EA) for the Courtenay Wind Project in the *Federal Register* for a 30-day public comment period that will run through June 18. The EA analyzes the risk of bald eagle take associated with the operation of the existing 100-turbine Courtenay Wind Farm in North Dakota, and assesses the potential effects of issuing an eagle take permit (ETP) and a no action alternative (i.e., no permit issued) on the human and natural environment. If issued, the five-year ETP would require that the applicant implement a conservation program to avoid and minimize the project's impacts to eagles, as described in the applicant's Eagle Conservation Plan. FWS will announce the availability of the draft EA on May 17th when it is made available in the *Federal Register* Reading Room. Outreach will consist of posting the EA on Region 6's website, announcing its availability via a news release, and doing targeted outreach (phone calls or emails) to Congress, states, tribes, federal partners, and other key stakeholders. (05/23/2018)

On May 15, the Garfield County Commission and Garfield County Sheriff signed a formal resolution requesting that the NPS remove Utah prairie dogs from Bryce Canyon National Park due to concerns with water contamination. Utah prairie dogs are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and have inhabited the area near the park's domestic water supply for many years. When the water table rises during spring run off or during the monsoon season, and water is flushed through prairie dog burrows, there is a risk of fecal contamination before treatment. FWS has worked with the NPS to implement a series of measures, including construction of a prairie-dog exclusion fence in October 2017. Prairie dogs were translocated away from the exclusion area following completion of the fence, but some prairie dogs had already entered hibernation and remained in the area. The remaining prairie dogs will be removed from within the fenced area and translocated to other sites on federal lands this summer. The NPS water treatment, as with other public water treatment facilities, successfully mitigates the risk to the public by treating the water first through filtration and then with chlorine application. There have been no positive samples for *E. coli* or coliform following the NPS water treatment and the water is safe for public consumption. Due to the resolution, there have been recent media stories and NPS has led outreach efforts. (05/21/2018)

On May 15, a judge ruled against FWS on the withdrawal of the proposed rule to list the bi-state sage-grouse as a threatened species. The judge faulted FWS reliance on a population model developed by USGS; analysis of the likely effectiveness of proposed conservation efforts pursuant to Policy on Evaluation of Conservation Efforts when making Listing Decisions (PECE

policy); and the FWS's Significant Portion of the Range policy (and the application of that policy to the listing decision). Parties are to submit a proposed schedule for briefings on remedies within ten days of the decision. FWS, Interior Solicitor, and DOJ are determining how to address the judge's ruling. An if-asked statement has been developed to respond to media inquiries. (05/23/2018)

As early as May 21, the New Mexico Office of Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT), the Department of Agriculture (represented by the Forest Service), and the Department of the Interior (represented by FWS and BLM) (collectively, the Trustees), will announce a final Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Chevron Mining Inc, Questa Mine in northern New Mexico. The site is located five miles east of the Village of Questa, adjacent to the Red River and also includes mine tailing ponds located approximately nine miles west of the mine. The site is the location of a large groundwater contamination that will require treatment in perpetuity to mitigate human health risks. That treatment will use Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration settlement funds (\$4,000,000) for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement or acquisition of equivalent natural resources and services that were injured by the release of hazardous substances from the site. (05/23/2018)

On May 21, four Mexican wolf pups were removed from a captive litter at the Endangered Wolf Center in Eureka, Missouri, and flown to New Mexico. All four pups were inserted into two different wild wolf pack dens in New Mexico. The Interagency Field Team will monitor the recipient packs through the summer to determine the success of these cross-fostering actions. News release is be sent, conditional on the success of the cross-fostering effort. (05/23/2018)

## UPDATED ITEMS

On May 17, a court ruled in favor of the plaintiff's motion to reopen expert discovery for 60 days in litigation by Victor Fuentes, pastor and owner of the 40-acre Ministerio Solida Church Camp since 2012, against Ash Meadows NWR. This will allow the plaintiff's new lawyer time to become familiar with the case, to produce its own expert reports, and to depose our experts. The 40-acre private camp is an in-holding within the boundary of the refuge. (Updated 5/23/18)

In late May or June, a public meeting is tentatively being planned with all members of Kansas's Groundwater Management District #5 in regard to FWS's senior water right of 14,632 acre-feet at Quivira NWR, which a report states, is regularly and significantly impaired by upstream groundwater pumping. The Chief Engineer for the state of Kansas continues to work with all interested stakeholders to develop a solution to the impairment. As a corrective action, the groundwater district drafted a conceptual Local Enhanced Management Area proposal, a grassroots plan that is being developed in order to rectify these impairments caused by these withdrawals from junior water users. On April 26, the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture sent a letter to the district indicating that a new draft of the proposal should be submitted to their office by May 18. The revised proposal must include specific measures regarding allowable groundwater withdrawals, water use goals, and requires evaluation of the plan in 2024, after implementation. (Updated 05/23/2018)



FWS biologists have been working closely with staffs of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Hecla mining company, and private consultants, to expedite the environmental planning for the Montanore Mine project. USFS is preparing a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the mine and must concurrently prepare a new Biological Assessment (BA) in accordance with the Endangered Species Act. USFS does not want to initiate ESA Section 7 formal consultation until public comments have been received on the Draft SEIS, which USFS will need to address and may change the analysis required. To the extent possible, FWS is concurrently drafting a biological opinion (BO) with as much existing information as possible, while waiting for the full description of the proposed action and its related impacts to complete the analysis. On April 11, 2018, FWS met with USFS biologists and a Hecla environmental consultant to review the adequacy of the draft bull trout section of the biological assessment (BA). FWS believes that the bull trout BA is adequate for initiation of consultation on the Montanore proposed action. There is no timeline for submission of a draft terrestrial BA to FWS, nor is there a timeline for initiation of consultation. Over the past two weeks, FWS has been in contact with Hecla to clarify the scope of the forthcoming biological opinion and to check on status. (Updated 05/23/2018)

#### National Park Service

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On May 14, Gulf Islands National Seashore announced that the small island west of the Pascagoula shipping channel has officially been added to the list of Domestic Names by the Board on Geographic Names. The newly named West Petit Bois Island developed over time through dredging activities and has unofficially been known as disposal area #10 and Sand Island in the past. Listing West Petit Bois Island enables the national seashore to better manage the island along with the other islands which make up the national seashore. (5/23/2018).

On May 25 or 26, a news release will announce the designation of 19 national recreation trails in 17 states, adding more than 370 miles to the national recreation trails system of more than 1,000 trails in all 50 states. The announcement may be done in conjunction with the Secretary's visit to South Dakota. (5/23/2018)

Near Memorial Day (exact date TBD), NPR's *All Things Considered* will air a story about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection, including the issue of visitors leaving cremated remains at the memorial. *All Things Considered* co-host Ari Shapiro recently visited the NPS National Capital Region's Museum Resource Center to interview National Mall and Memorial Parks curator Laura Anderson and Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection curator Janet Folkerts for the story. (5/23/2018)

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

On May 25, the NPS will publish a Federal Register notice announcing that the Department has authorized the preparation of a World Heritage nomination for the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks in Ohio. With nine component properties including those that form Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, and others managed by the State of Ohio, this series of

geometric mounds is approximately 2,000 years old. The nomination file, which will take more than a year to draft, will be developed by local proponents in Ohio with guidance from the NPS. Upon completion and review, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks will determine whether the nomination will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee. (Updated 05/23/18).

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (PDAS) John Tahsuda will be traveling to Rapid City, South Dakota, on May 30-31, but otherwise will be in the office this week.

Acting Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Director Darryl LaCounte will be on leave May 29 but will return to the office May 30.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Director Tony Dearman will be working from Oklahoma May 29 and will be on leave the remainder of the week.

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management George Bearpaw will be in the office this week.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On June 6, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold a business meeting on the nomination of Tara Sweeney for Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs.

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing Tribal consultations on the DOI Reorganization was distributed last week. The consultation series includes sessions in New Buffalo, Michigan; Billings, Montana; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Jackson, California; Banning, California; Juneau, Alaska; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Philadelphia, Mississippi, from June to August this year.

#### **ONGOING ITEMS**

On May 31, PDAS Tahsuda will host a Tribal consultation in Rapid City, South Dakota, on potential revisions to the fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR Part 151. A Dear Tribal Leader letter was distributed on May 1.

On June 3 and 4, PDAS Tahsuda will be hosting three listening sessions at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Mid-Year Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the sessions is in the surname process. The listening sessions will

address the DOI Reorganization, potential revisions to fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR Part 151, and law enforcement. There will also be a joint BIE and U.S. Department of Education listening session on set-aside funding for BIE.

The week of June 4, PDAS Tahsuda plans to attend several sessions at the NCAI Mid-Year Conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

#### Bureau of Indian Affairs

#### **NEW ITEMS**

BIA will internally announce that Tim LaPointe has been permanently appointed to the BIA Midwest Regional Director position.

On June 7, BIA's Chief Forester, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management (DFWFM) is scheduled to speak at the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Intertribal Timber Council Symposium hosted by the Quinault Indian Nation in Ocean Shores, Washington.

On June 19-21, the Indian Energy Service Center (IESC) has tentatively scheduled the next Fort Berthold Federal Partners Meeting in Lakewood, Colorado. The Three Affiliated Tribes will participate in a listening session as part of the meeting. The discussion topics are issues associated with mineral and energy development located on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation.

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 12-13, the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) will host a meeting and field tour in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The purpose of meeting is to view, understand and build from on the ground success that supports WFLC priorities and the goals of the Cohesive Strategy.

#### Bureau of Indian Education

#### **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

BIE is preparing the notice to establish its BIE Standards, Assessments, and Accountability System Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. The deadline for nominations to the committee was May 17. Comments on the proposed membership were minimal and the suggested nominees will be prepared for White House review and approval.

#### **ONGOING ITEMS**

May 31-June 2, BIE will conduct a Riverside Indian School, College Readiness visit at SIPI to support the enrollment management plan to prepare 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> graders towards college readiness.

May 30-June 2, SIPI's IC-Mars project lead and four students will attend the TECHLAV Annual Meeting in North Carolina University AT&T in Greensboro, North Carolina.

On June 3, BIE will host a joint listening session with U.S. Department of Education at the NCAI mid-year conference in Kansas City, Missouri, addressing set-aside funding for BIE. BIE Deputy Bureau Director Bart Stevens, the Chief of Staff Juanita Mendoza, and the Associate Deputy Director for the Division of Performance and Accountability Jeff Hamley will participate represent BIE at the session.

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On June 13, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold an oversight hearing on the GAO High Risk report for BIA and BIA. BIE Director Dearman will serve as a witness. A witness for BIA has yet to be identified.

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

June 19 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization at Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, in New Buffalo, Michigan. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

June 21 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization in Billings, Montana. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

June 25 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

June 28 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization at Jackson Rancheria in Jackson, California. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

July 23 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization at Morongo in Banning, California. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

August 2 is the scheduled date for a Tribal consultation session on the DOI reorganization in Juneau, Alaska. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

August 7 is the scheduled date for a Tribal listening session on the DOI reorganization in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

August 9 is the scheduled date for a Tribal listening session on the DOI reorganization at Mississippi Choctaw in Philadelphia, Mississippi. The Dear Tribal Leader letter announcing the session was signed May 17.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On July 17, the Office of Self-Governance will host the DOI Self-Governance Advisory Committee and Technical Workgroup Quarterly Meeting. The following day, the Self-Governance Advisory Committee will meet with the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs.

### Bureau of Indian Affairs

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

June 30 is the deadline for written comments on whether and how to revise BIA's fee-to-trust regulations at 25 CFR 151, per the Dear Tribal Leader letter dated February 15, 2018.

### Bureau of Indian Education

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

July 1-7, the Native Youth Community Adaptation and Leadership Congress (NYCALC), an interagency effort of more than eight Federal agencies, will support 100 Tribal students in a program to promote conservation on Tribal lands and workforce development.

The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children originally scheduled for May 16-18 in Choctaw, Mississippi, is being rescheduled to a later date to ensure that sufficient advance notice is provided to Board members and the public.

Throughout June and July, BIE will host regional trainings for BIE-funded school staff and Title V staff:

- June 10-15 – Chemawa Indian School, Salem, Oregon
- June 17-22 – Bloomington, Minnesota
- June 24-29 – Cherokee, North Carolina
- July 9-13 – Flandreau, South Dakota
- July 16-20 – Phoenix, Arizona
- July 23-27 – Bismarck, North Dakota

July 14-20, an instructor (Chef Leonard Bailey) and five SIPI Culinary Arts students will attend the 2018 American Culinary Federation (ACF) National Training in New Orleans, LA. Chef Bailey is part of a national competition for ACF Chef Educator of the year.

### **Awareness**

#### **Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs**

### **NEW ITEMS**

Two rules updating Interior addresses in the Code of Federal Regulations are in surname. One updates the address of the Office of Federal Acknowledgment for receipt of acknowledgment petitions. The other updates the address for the BIA Office of Indian Services for the receipt of Indian Child Welfare Act adoption notices.

### **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **Bureau of Indian Affairs**

### **NEW ITEMS**

BIA released the final guidance for Tribes on how to conduct background checks of foster care parents and employees under the Native American Children's Safety Act (NACSA), in advance of the June 3 statutory deadline. BIA Office of Indian Services will provide technical assistance to Tribes on implementing the guidance.

### **UPDATED ITEMS**

In the week ending May 15, there were 102 wildfires on trust lands. Of these, 64 were uncontained, 18 were contained or controlled and 20 were out. The largest wildfire on trust land was 66 acres which is located at San Carlos Agency. The next two largest fires were five and two acres, both burning at Red Lake Agency. The remaining 61 wildfires were less than 0.5 acres in size.

Fee-to-Trust Completed Cases: For the time period of May 9 to 16, 2018, BIA completed one land acquisition case, taking a total of 15 acres into trust for one Tribe. To date for calendar year 2018, 115 cases have been completed totaling approximately 8,451 acres. Since 2009, a total of approximately 662,695 acres have been conveyed into trust.

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

A proposed rule to revise regulations addressing rights-of-way on Indian land (25 CFR 169) to exempt Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments from bonding and security requirements is in surname with the Office of the Solicitor.

## Bureau of Indian Education

### **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

### **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

June 4 – July 27, the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) will host a non-residential Summer Bridge Program for commuter students, 21 years of age or older beginning on the SIPI campus in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY INSULAR AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

#### Travel

- AS Doug Domenech has no planned travel.
- Office of Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula has no planned travel.
- Office of International Affairs Acting Directors are Barbara Pitkin and David Downes have no planned travel.
- Oceans Program Coordinator Liza Johnson has no planned travel.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### Insular Affairs

#### **Press Releases Planned for the Following:**

- Grant Award: Children's Healthy Living Program \$89,997
- Grant Award: RMI 4 Atoll Healthcare Second Half \$713,359.82

#### International Affairs

### **NEW ITEMS**

Nothing significant..

### **UPDATED ITEMS**

Noting significant.

### **ONGOING ITEMS**

### Insular Affairs

U.S. Interagency Meeting on U.S. National Security Interests in Micronesia: On June 8, the State Department and DOI will co-host a U.S.-only interagency dialogue to secure the future U.S. presence in Micronesia to include 1) a session on the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, which builds upon the work of the USG Interagency Working Group on the Freely Associated States and aims to secure U.S. interests beyond 2023; and 2) a session on U.S. territories: Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The dialogue will be held at the SBU/FOUO level.

### International Affairs

**Northern Rangelands Trust Law Enforcement Exchange:** DOI-ITAP is coordinating a technical exchange May 12-June 1 between two law enforcement officers from the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) and Yellowstone National Park. The NRT officers will be joining National Park staff during the seasonal law enforcement officers training. This exchange will provide field law enforcement training. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds this work.

**NAFTA 2.0:** INT Policy Division staff continue to coordinate DOI input into interagency review of negotiating positions as requested by USTR, including environmental, water, and indigenous issues relevant for DOI, under the direction of the Deputy Secretary and ASIIA.

**Initial Assessment for Energy Governance and Capacity Building Needs in Romania:** DOI-ITAP has been invited to participate in a scoping assessment led by the State Department's Energy Resources Bureau June 11-15. Representatives from USGS and BOEM and/or BSEE have also been invited to participate. Site visits will focus on oil and gas concessions, data management and environmental risk mitigation. This initial assessment might lead to further energy governance and capacity building in the region later this year. The U.S. Department of State funds this work.

### Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

**National Ocean Month:** June has historically been proclaimed as National Ocean Month, including by President Trump in 2017. Two new issues of the DOI NEWSWAVE newsletter are expected to be released in June to coincide with any Administration announcements and Capitol Hill Ocean Week the following week.

### 15-60 Day Look-Ahead

#### Insular Affairs

#### **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**



## Insular Affairs

**White House Visit for the Freely Associated States:** [UPDATE] An official meeting request has been submitted to Cabinet Affairs. Summer 2018 – The State Department is supportive of a request from the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for a working meeting at the White House for the Presidents of the three freely associated states: Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. Secretary Zinke and FSM President Peter Christian discussed this briefly during a 2017 meeting at Interior.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

### International Affairs

**Bilateral Meetings in Conjunction with World Gas Conference:** INT is coordinating with staff from External and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Energy Counselor's office, as well as with the State Department, regarding potential meetings between senior DOI officials and foreign counterparts while they are in Washington DC for the June 25-29 World Gas Conference. INT will collaborate with relevant bureaus and offices to assist with briefing materials and coordination with the State Department as needed.

**Environmental Affairs Council Meeting in Dominican Republic:** DOI-ITAP will present its successes on training and coordination at the Environmental Affairs Council Meeting June 20-21. DOI-ITAP will also coordinate with State Department to develop a side event to highlight coordination and joint activities between DOI-ITAP, Ministries of Environment, and law enforcement agencies in the region on wild flora and fauna enforcement and prosecutions. The U.S. Department of State funds this work.

**Women in Marine Conservation Leadership Training in the Philippines:** A leadership training course targeting women working in the field of marine conservation will be held July 26-27. The training will focus on understanding leadership; identifying strengths; gaining insight into one's own patterns, beliefs and values; strengthening interpersonal and communication skills; making strong decisions; empowering others; and other tenets of strong leadership development. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds this work.

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

Nothing significant.

## Oceans, Great Lakes, and Coasts

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

### **Awareness**

#### **International Affairs**

**Vietnamese Minister Meeting with Secretary and MOU Signing:** The Vietnamese Minister of Public Security Tô Lâm has postponed his trip to Washington, DC until a date to be determined, likely late June or early July. The Vietnamese government has expressed interest in the Minister meeting with the Secretary to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen U.S. – Vietnam cooperation to combat wildlife trafficking. The Ministry of Public Security is the government ministry responsible for managing Vietnam’s police and public security forces, which play a key role in wildlife law enforcement. INT continues to work with FWS Office of Law Enforcement and the State Department to finalize the MOU with Vietnam.

**Assistance to Tribes Seeking Repatriation from Abroad:** INT Policy Division staff continues to monitor developments and coordinate with other federal offices regarding another Paris auction of American Indian items announced for June 21.

**Interagency U.S.-China Science and Technology Agreement (STA) Discussions:** INT is preparing for expected interagency discussions on the renewal of the U.S. - China STA, which may begin in the next couple of weeks. The National Security Council will lead these discussions. The interagency will be considering how to move forward with the STA renewal given some U.S. agency concerns about intellectual property rights, and concerns about whether China sees the STA Annex on intellectual property rights as legally binding. USGS has six protocols that fall under the STA umbrella agreement.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

ASLM Joe Balash is in Alaska.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kate MacGregor is in Alaska.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Casey Hammond will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BSEE Director Scott Angelle will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed will be in Washington, D.C. attending regularly scheduled meetings.

### **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

#### **Bureau of Land Management**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

**May 29.** BLM-AK staff working on the Ambler Road Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will meet with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources and Department of Health and Social Services to discuss the health impact assessment scope of work. Participants will include Project Manager Tina McMaster-Goering, Central Yukon Office Assistant Field Manager Bill Hedman, HDR Contractor John McPherson, State Epidemiologist and Chief Dr. Joe McLaughlin, and Public Health Specialist Sarah Yoder. The State of Alaska's Ambler Road project will provide an all-season access road to promote exploration, development, and production of mineral resources in the Ambler mineral belt in northwest Alaska's Kobuk Valley. The State of Alaska is a strong proponent of the project for economic development. The positions of communities and Alaska Native villages in the area range from cautiously optimistic to strongly opposed. The villages of Bettles, Evansville, and Allakaket have issued resolutions formally opposing the project. There is strong opposition from both national and Alaska-based environmental groups and strong support from pro-development groups such as the Alaska Miners Association. NANA Regional Corporation and Doyon Limited, both Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Corporations, are officially neutral on the project. The tentative schedule for the Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS is March 29, 2019. (5/18/18)

**May 29 – 31.** BLM-UT. The BLM is hosting two external meetings as part of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) planning effort. The first, to be held at the BLM Administrative Building in Kanab, Utah on May 29-30, will be a second cooperating agency workshop (the first was held in early May) to continue developing and finalizing alternatives. The team anticipates completing alternative development by June 1 to use as the framework for analyzing potential environmental impacts. The three GSENM draft management plans and the draft management plan for the lands excluded from the Monument are scheduled for release in July 2018. The second meeting is a socio-economic workshop to be held in Kanab on May 31 that will include county and city officials, cooperators, stakeholders, and interested public. Public outreach and notification will be via press release in local newspapers, email to cooperating agencies, and on the BLM website and ePlanning site. (5/18/18)

**May 29 – Jun 1.** BLM-OR/WA. Lakeview Resource Area plans to release the Beaty Butte Gather and Fertility Control Plan Environmental Assessment (EA) for public comment. This EA analyzes five alternatives to manage wild horse populations within the Beaty Butte Herd Management Area (HMA) as part of an innovative public-private management strategy that strives to eliminate helicopter gathers and shift to a system that will sustain appropriate management levels by routinely bait-trapping horses, administering PZP to captured mares and culling up to 20 young horses per year for training to make them attractive candidates for adoption. This project has the support of advocacy, environmental, ranching and community groups, and is not expected to be controversial. (5/18/18)

**May 30.** BLM-CA. The Needles Field Office has completed the environmental review of the Halloran Springs ICT Communication site in San Bernardino County and is preparing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Decision Record for the project. The site is less than 10 acres including the access road, and will provide broadband service to ensure cellular and internet access. The BLM anticipates approving the FONSI and Decision Record on May 30. The site is not anticipated to be controversial. (5/18/18)

**May 30.** BLM-UT. Leaders from BLM-UT and the Manti-La Sal National Forest have been invited to attend a portion of the Bears Ears Inter-tribal Coalition tribal leader retreat in Durango, Colorado. Tribal leaders have set aside two hours during the retreat to meet with government officials, and we anticipate receiving additional tribal input on the Bears Ears National Monument planning effort. BLM-UT State Director Ed Roberson and Canyon Country District Manager Lance Porter will attend the meeting. The meeting is not controversial, and this invitation is considered a positive development and opportunity for further dialog. (5/18/18)

**May 30 – 31.** The American Recreation Coalition's Partners Outdoors 2018 event will occur at the Main Interior Building (May 30) and at the James Whitten Building (May 31) in Washington D.C. Ben Cassidy, Senior Deputy Director, DOI Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs, will participate on a panel discussion, *Enhancing Access to Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities: Meeting the Challenges of Today*, on May 31. One BLM employee, Jack Placchi from Colorado, will receive a Legends award. BLM attendees are being confirmed. Janet Ady, Division Chief, Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships, and Kate Yanchow, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Recreation and Visitor Services, are members of the event steering committee. (5/18/18)

**May 30 – 31.** BLM-MT/DK. Acting State Director Jon Raby will address the Montana State Legislature's interim Environmental Quality Council during its quarterly meeting in Helena. Topics will include the upcoming fire season, oil and gas leases, and how the BLM strives to be a good neighbor to surrounding communities. Along with Mr. Raby's briefing, Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Dan Wenk will talk about his agency's recent projects and programs. Each briefing will last no more than 15 minutes and will allow time for questions from the Council members. (5/18/18)

**Late May.** BLM-ID. The Pocatello Field Office anticipates signing a Finding of No Significant Impact / Decision Record for the Chubb Spring Non-Competitive Mineral Material Contract at the end of May once the Environmental Assessment and appraisal are complete. The project is located on about 20 acres of split-estate lands (private surface/federal minerals) and is not expected to be controversial. The noncompetitive contract would be for approximately 22,320 tons of basalt rip rap. The contract applicant is Seaton Earthmover, Inc. (5/18/18)

**June 4.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will initiate a consulting party process under the National Historic Preservation Act to inform the BLM on management of Native American rock art recently discovered in a proposed gravel pit on West Mountain in Utah County. The Field Office has begun coordinating with the Utah County Commission and the Utah State Historic Preservation Office, and also intends to consult with the Advisory Council on Historic Properties. In 2011, the BLM approved an aggregate rock mining pit for Kilgore Companies on West Mountain. In 2016, the BLM approved an expansion pit, with the standard stipulation that

discovery of previously unknown cultural resources would warrant additional BLM decision-making. Kilgore has not yet begun operating the expanded pit, as a permit from the State of Utah is still pending. In December 2017, the Utah Rock Art Research Association (URARA) notified the BLM of newly discovered rock art sites in the expansion area, and a formal survey confirmed URARA's findings. Kilgore has informed the BLM that they do not want to "avoid" the rock art, and would like to pursue "mitigation" under the National Historic Preservation Act's consulting party process. (5/18/18)

**June 6. BLM-ID.** Members of BLM Idaho's Wild Horse and Burro team will host the annual public tour of the privately-owned Bruneau Off-Range Wild Horse Corrals. There will be two tours offered to accommodate up to 40 visitors. Visitors will learn about the 80-acre facility that contains 39 large holding pens. These pens can safely hold about 100 horses each. Currently, there are 1,070 horses being cared for at the Bruneau facility. (5/18/18)

**June 6. BLM-MT/DK.** Acting State Director Jon Raby will provide opening remarks at the annual meeting of the Montana Association of State Grazing Districts in Lewistown, Montana. The organization has asked for a brief overview of the BLM grazing program, and the anticipated audience is 75-150 people. Local news media may attend. (5/18/18)

**June 6. BLM-WY.** The High Plains District Office and Buffalo Field Office management teams will attend a public meeting in Wright, Wyo. on tribal consultation and access for energy permitting in split estate and fee-fee-fed situations. ("Fee-fee-fed" refers to projects that drill from private surface into private minerals, and then move horizontally to intersect federal minerals.) The meeting is sponsored by the Campbell County Commissioners as part of ongoing efforts by the BLM and Campbell County to increase understanding among landowners. A consulting firm composed of tribal members will present on the tribal perspective relating to cultural sites in Campbell County. Campbell County asked the BLM to attend as a partner and speak to the regulatory aspects of the issue. The meeting is expected to be contentious, but not controversial. The BLM has presented to landowners in the region multiple times in the past, and has visited many of them at their ranches or in the office to discuss this issue, as well as the general role of the BLM in energy permitting. (5/18/18)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**May 18 – 27.** BLM-AK prepared a Federal Register Notice providing constructive notice of a decision approving 424.35 acres for conveyance to Sivuqaq, Inc., and Kukulget, Inc., for the Native villages of Gambell and Savoonga on the former St. Lawrence Island Reindeer Reserve. This is a non-discretionary action in accordance with Sec. 19(b) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the native corporations will receive title to the surface and subsurface estates. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/26/18) DTS 2099

**May 21 – 25.** BLM-ID. Boise District Fire and Aviation anticipates signing the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-Grouse Habitat (BOSH) Project. The Final EIS was released for a 30-day public availability period on Feb. 9. The Final EIS, which was developed in cooperation with state and federal agencies, analyzes the removal of encroaching Western juniper on 726,000 acres of sagebrush steppe in Owyhee County. This project builds on proactive land management policies and

practices to conserve the region's remaining sagebrush habitat, which supports significant economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, as well as abundant wildlife, including mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope and golden eagles. The public availability period closed on March 11. The BLM received ten comments, including comments addressing roughly three issues that will be documented in the ROD. The district is currently completing tribal consultation on the Final EIS and estimates signing the ROD the week of May 21. (2/21/18)

**May 21 – June 19.** BLM-AK is hosting public scoping meetings on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) during the 60-day public comment period that closes on June 19. Karen Mouritsen, BLM-AK Acting State Director, will attend the May 21-22 meetings in Arctic Village and Kaktovik, and the June 11 meeting in Venetie. Ted Murphy, BLM-AK Associate State Director, will attend the May 23 meeting in Utqiagvik, and the May 29 and 30 meetings in Fairbanks and Anchorage. The last public scoping meeting will take place in Washington, D.C. on June 15. Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Joseph Balash, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Kate MacGregor, and Senior Advisor for Alaska Affairs Steven Wackowski also plan to attend. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis that is required before a lease sale can be held. Because it is a major unexplored but potentially productive geologic onshore basin, oil and gas from the Coastal Plain is an important resource for meeting our nation's energy needs and achieving energy dominance. BLM-AK awarded EMPSi, a third-party contractor, the contract on April 18 to support development of the EIS. (3/16/18)

**May 24 – 25.** The National Association of Counties (NACo) Western Interstate Region (WIR) Annual Conference will be held in Sun Valley, Idaho. The WIR Conference brings together hundreds of county officials each year for a discussion of federal policy issues impacting counties and to help shape NACo's advocacy efforts on behalf of counties. BLM Deputy Director Brian Steed was invited to speak but cannot attend. BLM attendance is TBD. (4/26/18)

**May 24 – 29.** BLM-UT. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Notice of Intended Disposition will be published in four newspapers in the Four Corners region. Legal notices published May 10-15 and will publish again May 24-29. Consultation letters were mailed May 14. Publication communicates BLM-UT's intention to repatriate to the Hopi Tribe human remains and 4,885 associated funerary objects that were illegally excavated and/or disturbed in 2008 from Site 42SA9266 on BLM-administered lands in San Juan County, Utah. No press release will be issued. (3/23/18)

**May 24 – June 6.** BLM-UT. As part of the Bears Ears National Monument planning efforts, the BLM is hosting two more external meetings. BLM-UT will host external meetings on May 24-25 and June 6. The May 24-25 meeting in Moab will continue cooperating agency efforts to develop and finalize alternatives, building on the success of the first meeting held in early May. The June 6 meeting in Monticello is a socio-economic workshop that will include county and city officials, cooperators, stakeholders, and interested public. The Bears Ears National Monument Draft Monument Management Plan is scheduled for release in July 2018. (5/11/18)

**May 25.** BLM-NM. The Carlsbad Field Office anticipates publishing the Notice of Availability (NOA) for its Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, outlining the BLM's long-term "landscape-level" plans and goals for public lands in Lea, Chaves, and Eddy Counties. The planning area includes approximately 2.1 million acres of Federal surface land and 3 million acres of BLM-managed mineral estate in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea Counties. The NOA is under review in Washington D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 2012

**May 25.** BLM-NM. The Amarillo Field Office will announce plans to hold an auction on July 18 to sell federally owned helium. The Federal Helium Program is responsible for the conservation and sale of federally owned helium. The BLM operates and maintains a helium storage reservoir, enrichment plant and pipeline system, near Amarillo, Texas, that supplies enough helium to meet more than 40 percent of domestic demand for the gas. The field office will announce the auction and sale in a Federal Register Notice. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/20/18) DTS 1900

**May 28.** BLM-CO. The White River Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its plan (pending WO approval) to gather wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area in northwestern Colorado. WRFO estimates that there are 374 wild horses living outside the HMA. This includes 305 horses in the adjacent, controversial West Douglas Herd Area. BLM has never managed West Douglas for a long-term wild horse population because of habitat and terrain, and has not been able to remove all the wild horses from this area. Many activists want to see BLM maintain a wild horse population in West Douglas. Conversely, ranchers in the area have long argued for the removal of all wild horses in West Douglas. In September 2017, the BLM removed 86 wild horses from outside the Piceance-East Douglas HMA (but not from West Douglas) that were impacting private lands. WRFO is preparing a Determination of NEPA Adequacy for this year's potential gather, tiered to an environmental analysis completed last year. This gather targets only horses outside the HMA, so all horses gathered would be removed. No fertility treatments will be applied to mares for this gather. The Appropriate Management Level for the HMA is 135-235 wild horses and the current population estimate in the HMA is 544 wild horses. (4/10/18)

**May 28.** BLM-CO. The Little Snake Field Office and Northwest District plan to announce a public scoping period for a proposed summer bait-trap wild horse gather in the Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area (HMA). The proposed gather is under review in Washington, D.C. The appropriate management level for the HMA is between 163 and 362 wild horses. The BLM estimates the population in the HMA exceeds 700 horses. The Field Office and district have been working closely with a local partner group—the Sand Wash Advocacy Team—to treat mares with fertility control to slow the population growth. (3/16/18)

**May 29 – June 1.** BLM-ID. The Boise District is completing an environmental analysis to authorize the use of 18 herbicide active ingredients as authorized by the BLM in the 2016 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Aminopyralid, Fluroxypyr, and Rimsulfuron on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and the 2007 Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The forthcoming decision will determine how noxious weeds and invasive plants will be managed on public lands within the Boise District.

The Decision is anticipated to be signed the week of May 29, pending completion of Section 7 consultation. (3/20/18)

**May 30.** BLM-ID. The Bruneau Field Manager will issue a decision that designates 1,521 miles of routes as part of a comprehensive travel management plan within the Bruneau Field Office. In 2009, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The Canyonlands East Travel Management Plan is the first of five travel management plans that are underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. Local, state, and federal agencies and NGOs are generally supportive of it. The one exception is motorcycle groups. It is unknown whether they will appeal. (2/7/18)

**May 30.** BLM-ID. The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) Manager will issue a travel management plan decision for the southern portion of the NCA. In 2009, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act directed the BLM to complete travel management plans on all BLM-managed lands within Owyhee County. The NCA South Travel Management Plan is the second of five travel management plans that are underway. As with any Travel Management Planning, there may be some controversy. According to the Boise District Office, counties are generally okay with it. However, Idaho Parks & Recreation (state) and some motorized groups may appeal it. (2/7/18)

**May 31.** BLM-UT. The Fillmore Field Office expects to submit a letter of Non-Compliance to Red Dome Inc. for exceeding the approved disturbance amount of 64 acres in their Plan of Operations by 46 acres. This is an attempt to bring Red Dome Inc. back into compliance with 43 CFR 3890. This action may become controversial in the local area of Millard County. Red Dome currently mines volcanic cinders for a wide range of purposes. Field office staff have been in communication with Red Dome through meetings and letters over the last three years in an attempt to bring the site into compliance, but the company has not taken action. The Solicitor's Office is assisting field office staff with preparation of a Notice on Non-Compliance. Red Dome currently employs only a few local individuals; however, there is the potential for Red Dome to become a larger local employer. (4/26/18)

**May 31 – June 13.** Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 required Federal land managers to designate “energy corridors” on lands in the 11 contiguous western states. The Sec. 368 corridors are for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines as well as electric transmission and distribution lines. As part of the corridor designation process, Federal agencies were required to complete environmental reviews and incorporate the corridors into existing land use plans. In 2009, several non-profit organizations filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court alleging that in designating the corridors agencies did not comply with the Energy Policy Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and other related laws. The parties negotiated a settlement agreement that directs the agencies to periodically review corridors on a regional basis. These reviews are moving forward, and stakeholder workshops are scheduled for Region 2 & 3 as follows: May 31 in Albuquerque, NM; June 4 in Phoenix, AZ; June 6 in Reno, NV; June 11 in Grand Junction, CO; and June 13 in Richfield, UT. <http://corridoreis.anl.gov> (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-CO. BLM Colorado is preparing a Notice of Proposed Reinstatement for Context Energy's terminated oil and gas lease (COC77678). The lease is located in Archuleta and La



Plata counties, totaling approximately 1,920 acres. The lease was terminated on June 1, 2017 because Contex Energy failed to pay rental fees on time. If approved, the lease would be reinstated with an increased royalty rate and rental fee. BLM-CO is planning for a May 2018 publication in the Federal Register. The Notice was sent to the Federal Register and is awaiting a publication date. (4/4/18)

**In May.** BLM-UT anticipates publishing a Federal Register notice for the modified competitive sale of 160 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value to the adjacent landowners Hunter Prep Plant LLC, Ross Huntington, and Clinton Price. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to the adjoining land owners on a modified competitive basis, with Hunter Prep Plant, LLC as the designated bidder, giving them the right to meet the highest bid pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-2(a)(1). Conveyance of the identified public land would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18) DTS 1985

**Late May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona Strip Field Office is preparing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The analysis in the RMP amendment will be incorporated into an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead agency to complete the EIS for the Pipeline Project; the BLM is a cooperating agency. The Utah Division of Water Resources is the Project proponent. Although only a small portion (900 acres) of the management area is affected, the BLM must complete the RMP amendment to address inconsistencies between the decisions in the current RMP, the proposed route for the Pipeline, and an existing utility corridor designated. Approximately 1.5 miles of the proposed Pipeline would run through the Kanab Creek ACEC. This information will be incorporated into the FERC's EIS for the larger Lake Powell Pipeline Project. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 1860

**Late May.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office has been requested to transfer 3,380.69 acres (surface and subsurface) to the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) through a noncompetitive direct sale for the appraised fair market value. The subject parcels are on the western and southern margins of the Gila River Indian Reservation in Maricopa and Pinal Counties in Arizona, south of the Phoenix metro area. These lands are isolated from other BLM-managed lands in the area and were identified as suitable for disposal in the BLM's Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. The GRIC is interested in acquiring these lands because they are adjacent to its reservation and cultural resources significant to them are present on these lands. The GRIC formally submitted the sale request in 2015. The BLM-AZ Land Tenure Steering Committee recommended pursuing this action in May 2015; this recommendation was approved by the Arizona State Director. The BLM has completed an appraisal to determine fair market value of the parcel (\$9,620,000) and is in the process of notifying other potential interested and qualified parties about the sale. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 1804

**Late May.** BLM-CO. The Royal Gorge Field Office has prepared a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) for a direct sale of four parcels totaling 6.72 acres to the City of Black Hawk in Gilpin County. The adjacent, surrounding lands are primarily owned by the city and they intend to use the parcels for infrastructure, recreation and open space. The parcels were segregated from the

1872 Mining Law, which expired May 5. The proposal itself is not considered controversial. The potential for controversy has increased now that the segregation period expired due to the possibility of mining claims being filed on the parcels, which would interfere with the city's plan. Prior to the expiration, RGFO issued site-type rights-of-way to themselves on all four parcels to preserve the city's plan for the parcels. RGFO is planning for a late May 2018 publication in the Federal Register. The Notice was sent to the Federal Register and is awaiting a publication date. (2/7/18) DTS 1995

**Late May.** BLM-WY. The Buffalo Field Office will release the I-90 Corridor Travel Management Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), initiating a public scoping period that will end in June or July. Two open-house public meetings will be held during this period, during which BLM specialists will be available to answer questions. The meetings will be held in Gillette at the Campbell County Public Library on June 5, and in Buffalo at the BLM field office on June 6. The planning area is located between the cities of Buffalo and Gillette along Interstate 90 and contains 108,437 acres of BLM-administered land. The majority of the area is in Johnson County, with the southeastern portion in Campbell County. The I-90 corridor has a high density of oil and gas wells and associated infrastructure at or near the end of production. As the wells reach the end of their life cycle, the well pads, roads, and other infrastructure will be reclaimed. This area is also popular for big game hunters accessing BLM-managed lands. The meetings are not anticipated to be controversial. (3/1/18)

**Early June.** BLM-UT. The Utah State Director will transmit a Federal Register notice to WO-240 regarding a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) effort. This notice will correct a previous notice published in 2004 to update the minimum number of individuals from two archaeological sites in southwestern Utah based on updated osteological analysis. Publishing the notice in the Federal Register will be one of the final steps in the NAGPRA process to repatriate the remains of 12 individuals and thousands of associated funerary objects to Hopi Tribe. In accordance with the results of the tribal consultations, all of the human remains and funerary objects will be reburied on BLM-managed lands administered by the Kanab Field Office in Kane County, Utah. (3/20/18)

**June 4.** BLM-UT. The BLM Moab Field Office intends to initiate scoping and hold public meetings for the Canyon Rims Travel Management Plan effort, which is 90,954 acres in the Hatch Point area, in northern San Juan County. Two public meetings are scheduled: June 13 in Moab and June 14 in Monticello. A press release announcing the meetings is scheduled to be issued at least two weeks prior to the first public meeting. The scoping period will take place June 4 – July 5. This travel plan is scheduled to be completed by May 2021, as required by the May 31, 2017 Resource Management Plan Settlement Agreement. (4/4/18)

**June 4 and 6.** BLM-CO. The Kremmling Field Office will host public open house meetings on June 4 in Silverthorne and on June 6 in Kremmling to provide information and accept written comments for a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing a proposed land exchange with Galloway, Inc., owners of the Blue Valley Ranch. Under the proposal, the BLM would convey approximately 1,489 acres of public land in Grand County to Blue Valley Ranch in exchange for 1,830 acres of privately held land in Summit and Grand counties. If approved the exchange would allow the BLM to improve public access, facilitate recreation and increase

big-game winter range in the area. The Notice of Availability and 45-day public comment period for the Draft EIS was announced May 11. (2/14/18)

## ONGOING ITEMS

**In May.** A report to Congress on efforts to conserve Greater Sage-Grouse, restore sagebrush habitat, and implement a native seed strategy was due July 4, 2017, per direction from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017. The report is pending final review. (4/4/18) DTS 11379

**In May.** SO 3359 implements Executive Order 13817, which aims to reduce the vulnerability to disruption of critical mineral supply among other stated goals. The Order requires BLM to submit to the Secretary, within 60-days, a report with a list of recommendations to: 1) improve access to lands to explore for and develop critical minerals; 2) streamline permitting and review processes related to critical minerals development; and 3) otherwise increase critical mineral discovery, production, and domestic refining. The BLM has drafted a report with 13 recommendations across these categories that is under review in Washington. (3/30/18)

**In May.** At the Department's request, the BLM prepared for the Office of Management and Budget a report on hardrock mineral royalties regimes in the United States. The report discusses options for a Federal royalty on hardrock minerals, litigation risks, legislative history, and provides additional background. It is under review in the BLM Washington Office. (3/30/18)

**In May.** BLM-AZ. The Arizona State Office has received five Expressions of Interest (EOI) for oil and gas leasing between October 2017 and January 2018. The EOI's total 6,761 acres and are located in Apache and Navajo counties. The adjudication has been completed, and three parcels have been created and forwarded to the Safford Field Office for National Environmental Policy Act analysis. (4/26/18)

**In May.** BLM-CA intends to renew the site license for Calpine's Sonoma Power Plant, which is located at The Geysers geothermal area in Sonoma County. The 30-year license required for operations has expired. The Ukiah Field Office posted an unsigned Categorical Exclusion (CX) for public review on ePlanning on Jan. 24 and the CX was signed Feb. 1. Once the proponent signs the license, BLM-CA will finalize the process and issue the site license. (3/16/18)

**In May.** BLM-CA is preparing an Environmental Assessment and Resource Management Plan Amendment for a proposed transmission and water pipeline right-of-way (ROW) associated with the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Project in Riverside County. In 2014, the Eagle Crest Energy Company obtained a 50-year license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to construct, operate, and maintain the Eagle Mountain Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project. The BLM is processing a ROW application associated with the 1,300-megawatt project that includes a 500-kV transmission line and a 12-inch water pipeline energy transmission. The project is estimated to create 4,300 jobs during construction and will contribute to the state's energy portfolio. The City of Palm Springs and Cathedral City, environmental groups, and Colorado River Indian Tribes have voiced concern over the project, including its proximity to Joshua Tree National Park, impacts to critical or endangered desert species, and potential impacts to water, cultural, and historic resources. The project is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18)

**In May.** BLM-CA. The Central Coast Field Office will publish the Final Supplementary Rules related to dog management on public lands at Fort Ord National Monument. These rules also clarify rules in place since 1996 and are consistent with the Resource Management Plan. The rules are responsive to hazards from potential unexploded military munitions and explosives and visitor conflicts in a high-use recreation area. The rules are not expected to be controversial. The Notice is pending approval in Washington, D.C. (3/1/18) DTS 1413

**In May.** BLM MT/DK. The Butte Field Office is conducting prescribed burns as part of the vegetation restoration project in the Iron Mask Planning Area of Broadwater County, Mont. This effort continues despite Native Ecosystem Council (NEC) and Alliance for the Wild Rockies (AWR) having filed a Complaint for Injunctive Relief in U.S. District Court seeking to halt the project. The BLM has been formally served with the complaint. The Butte Field Office is working with the DOI Solicitor's Office and Department of Justice to prepare a response. Both NEC and AWR filed administrative protests and appeals with OHA and IBLA on these same actions, but did not prevail in that review process. (3/30/18)

**Late May.** BLM-AK will submit a Federal Register Notice for revocation of five Public Land Orders (PLOs), which will open approximately 229,632 acres in the Goodnews Bay region for surface entry, mineral exploration and mining; it will also make the state selections effective, and allow the BLM to move forward in conveying lands to the State under their Statehood entitlement. The PLOs were issued in 1972, pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Sec. 17(d)(1), and were recommended for revocation in the 2008 Bay Resource Management Plan. The Notice is under review at the BLM Alaska State Office. (3/1/18)

**Late May.** BLM-CO. The Grand Junction Field Office plans to announce a decision to approve the proposed "Palisade Plunge" trail. The proposed 30-mile non-motorized trail is a collaborative effort between the BLM, U.S. Forest Service Grand Mesa Ranger District, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Town of Palisade, and the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association. The Palisade Plunge is one of the Colorado Governor's "Colorado 16" projects to support trails and promote outdoor recreation in the state. Approximately 18 months of construction is expected to complete the trail before it is accessible to the public. (5/4/18)

**Late May.** BLM-CO. The Grand Junction Field Office will release the oil and gas leasing environmental assessment for South Shale Ridge, which includes 16 parcels totaling approximately 23,157 acres north of Grand Junction in Mesa County for a 30-day public review. Oil and gas leasing in the area was successfully challenged in 2005 with leasing remanded until the Grand Junction Resource Management Plan (RMP) was updated to address a 1997 Wilderness inventory. The updated Grand Junction RMP was finalized in 2015. (5/4/18)

**Late May.** BLM-NV. A Notice of Intent to amend the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan is proposed for publication in the Federal Register. The amendment would enlarge the lands disposal boundary by 621 acres, and propose a direct sale of the 621 acres to the Spring Mountain Raceway, a resort lodge with a private race track. (5/11/18) DTS 1931

**Late May.** BLM-UT. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Notice of Intended Disposition will be published in two newspapers in the BLM Color Country District. This legal notice will run twice, two weeks

apart. Publication will communicate BLM-UT's intent to transfer custody of human remains and associated funerary objects that were inadvertently discovered by a member of the public and reported to Kane County Sheriff's Office. The BLM is working with the Hopi Tribe, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, and Paiute Tribe of Utah on this effort, and the final disposition of materials will be determined prior to publication of the legal notice. The quantity of materials is not yet known, as the remains and funerary objects remain in the ground. This notice is time-sensitive due to the immediate need for excavation and reburial of the materials prior to expected summer storms. The BLM is not planning to issue a press release on this effort. (5/11/18)

**Late May.** BLM-NV. A Notice of Intent to amend the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan is proposed for publication in the Federal Register. The amendment would enlarge the lands disposal boundary by 621 acres, and propose a direct sale of the 621 acres to the Spring Mountain Raceway, a resort lodge with a private race track. (5/11/18) DTS 1931

**Late May.** BLM-UT. In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Notice of Intended Disposition will be published in two newspapers in the BLM Color Country District. This legal notice will run twice, two weeks apart. Publication will communicate BLM-UT's intent to transfer custody of human remains and associated funerary objects that were inadvertently discovered by a member of the public and reported to Kane County Sheriff's Office. The BLM is working with the Hopi Tribe, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, and Paiute Tribe of Utah on this effort, and the final disposition of materials will be determined prior to publication of the legal notice. The quantity of materials is not yet known, as the remains and funerary objects remain in the ground. This notice is time-sensitive due to the immediate need for excavation and reburial of the materials prior to expected summer storms. The BLM is not planning to issue a press release on this effort. (5/11/18)

**Early June.** BLM-ID. BLM Four Rivers Field Office is coordinating with Ada County regarding a county ordinance to eliminate overnight camping within an area of the county that includes BLM-managed lands in the Boise Foothills, within the Ridge to Rivers trail system north of Boise. This area has been getting more use in recent years by people setting up impromptu camps and/or squatting in trailhead parking lots and day-use areas. This county ordinance would reduce conflicts with trail users, and Ada County expects that this will be in effect by June 2018. (4/20/18)

**June 1.** BLM-ID. Four Rivers Field Office is working with the Nature Conservancy on the planned donation of an 80-acre conservation easement associated with the Hixon Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse Area of Critical Environmental Concern that would expand protections on habitat for the Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse. The Nature Conservancy is purchasing a conservation easement that they intend to donate to BLM for long-term management. This is expected to be finalized by June 1. (4/10/18)

**June 1.** BLM-ID. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have requested and funded an investigation into the 1873 boundary survey of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Specifically, the Tribes assert the easterly boundary of the reservation should have been 30 miles further east, resulting in a shortage of approximately 600,000 acres. The Cadastral Survey investigation has affirmed the 1873 locations of the boundaries, with only minor differences of interpretation of the controlling natural features. Finalization of the report is anticipated June 1, 2018. However, it is

unlikely that the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes will drop their claim for many reasons: First, all metes-and-bounds descriptions are subject to differing interpretations. Second, their claims have been refuted in the past and their pursuit of compensation has persisted. Third, the report will indicate several interpretations of the written description, with the final finding being that the 1873 surveyor applied one interpretation to the conditions on-the-ground, and that interpretation was acceptable to the Surveyor General. The appropriate time to raise a claim pertaining to boundary disputes is when the "error" is first discovered. (4/26/18)

**June 1. BLM-MT/DK.** The BLM intends to implement the new Condition of Approval to address the backlog of Applications for Permits to Drill (APDs) on Indian Trust Lands on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota. Processing of over 250 APDs has languished because operators have failed to submit all the required paperwork. With Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) concurrence, the BLM historically waited to approve APDs until operators provided documentation they have applied for a new right-of-way (ROW) or have a letter of concurrence for an existing ROW with the BIA. To address this backlog, the BLM and BIA have proposed the following actions: 1) The BLM would approve pending APDs where NEPA analysis has been completed; requiring the operator to obtain a BIA ROW or letter of concurrence from the BIA prior to surface disturbing or drilling activity; and 2) For newly submitted APDs, the BLM will notify operators that they need to submit documentation that a ROW application or a letter requesting concurrence for using an existing ROW has been submitted to BIA to secure APD approval. If the operator fails to submit all necessary documentation within two years, the APD would be denied and returned according to Onshore Order #1. The Tribal Council has endorsed the proposal, and the BLM and the BIA Great Plains Regional Office presented this proposal to operators at a BIA, BLM and State of North Dakota joint operator meeting on April 25. (5/11/18)

**June 1. BLM-NV** expects to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with mineral segregation for the proposed Yellow Pine Solar Project in Clark County. The proposed project includes 9,290 acres of BLM-managed public lands 32 miles west of Las Vegas and 10 miles southeast of Pahrump, Nev. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (2/21/18) DTS 1722

**June 2. BLM-NM.** BLM New Mexico Acting State Director Aden Seidlitz will participate at an event to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System. The event will take place at the newest segment of the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail in Santa Fe, New Mexico. A variety of public trail events and activities will occur throughout the day, including opportunities to hike, bike, and ride horseback along the trail. The project is a partnership of the Federal Highway Administration's Federal Lands Access Program, Santa Fe County, the BLM, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and City of Santa Fe. (5/4/18)

**June 3. BLM-WY.** The Kemmerer Field Office is working with a new big game hunting outfitter in the final stages of their permit authorization. Dustin Lym with Big Rack Outfitters is requesting to start a big game hunting guide service to take clients out for big game animals such as elk, deer, antelope and moose. The permit will be issued for BLM-managed land only and the outfitter will be required to follow Special Recreation Permit stipulations and special stipulations for the Kemmerer Field Office. The permit is expected to be authorized for the 2018 hunting season starting in October. (5/11/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-ES proposes transfer by Quiet Title Deed of a former railroad right-of-way (ROW) to the Village of Forsyth, Macon County, Illinois. The transfer was requested by the Village of Forsyth for use as a recreational trail, under authority of the National Trails System Act. The ROW is 200 feet wide and totals approximately 18 acres. This action has been reviewed by the Pittsburgh Field Solicitor's Office and the Washington, D.C. Solicitor's Office. The transfer is supported by Illinois Congressman Rodney Davis (R-13th). (4/20/18)

**June 4 – 8.** BLM-WY will submit an updated Public Land Order (PLO) for the withdrawal of the Johnny Behind the Rocks (JBR) Recreation Zone near Lander. The proposed PLO would withdraw and close the subject lands to location and entry under the United States Mining Laws, but not from leasing under the mineral or geothermal leasing laws, for a period of 20 years. The JBR Recreation Zone was designated in the 2014 Lander Resource Management Plan to encourage non-motorized recreationists to engage in horseback riding, hiking, trail running, wildlife viewing and mountain biking. The BLM has invested in developing a trails system, parking lot and trail information kiosk with the local Lander Cycling, United States Department Agriculture, Forest Service, Wind River Backcountry Horsemen, Wyoming Conservation Corps, Encana Corporation and the Fremont County Recreation Board. The current trails attract regular usage by local and national recreationists. The temporary segregation created by the proposed application published in the Federal Register on June 10, 2016 (81 FR 37634) will expire on June 9, 2018. The PLO needs to be published by this date. (4/26/18)

#### Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

#### **NEW ITEMS**

**In late May or early June** (as soon as possible), BOEM is targeting to publish a notice in the Federal Register, which will reopen the comment period of the Call for Information and Nominations (Call) in the New York (NY) Bight (regarding offshore wind) until July 25. Requests for the extension were received from New Jersey Governor Murphy, the New Jersey congressional delegation, and the National Marine Fisheries Service, which will use the time to provide new data and analyses on commercial fisheries. The intent to reopen the comment period will be announced early in the week of May 21. (5/18/18)

**On May 30-31**, BOEM will be hosting representatives from the Danish Energy Agency and the Danish Embassy at MIB for a knowledge exchange on priority topics pertaining to offshore wind. The knowledge exchange will cover topics including long-term lease planning, early-stage lease package development, intergovernmental authorizations and permitting, and regulatory changes under consideration. (5/18/18)

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

**In late May or early June** (as soon as possible), BOEM is targeting to publish a notice in the Federal Register, which will reopen the comment period of the Atlantic (Offshore Wind) Leasing Path Forward Request for Feedback (RFF) until July 5. Requests for the extension were received from two Fishery Management Councils. The notice is currently with ASLM for surnaming. (5/4/18)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

On June 1, 2018, Federal defendants will respond to the Plaintiff's motion for summary judgment and cross-motion for summary judgment, including their response, if any, to Professor Greenstone's brief in the U.S. District Court of Montana. On May 7, 2018, the Court granted Professor Michael Greenstone's Motion for Leave to File an Amicus Brief. The Court found that Professor Greenstone may have unique information or perspective that can assist the Court. On June 8, 2017, Wild Earth Guardians and Montana Environmental Information Center submitted a Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief claiming that OSMRE failed to adequately analyze the indirect impacts of transportation, failed to adequately analyze greenhouse gases and impacts to the air from coal combustion, failed to consider cumulative actions, and failed to prepare an EIS for the October 2016 mining plan modification decision at the Spring Creek Mine. Petitioners also allege that the mining plan modification approval was unauthorized because the lease was invalid due to an alleged delegation of authority violation. (2/15/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Bureau of Land Management

## **NEW ITEMS**



**June 11 – 15.** BLM-MT/DK. Acting State Director Jon Raby and Chief of Communications Al Nash will visit Washington, D.C., to conduct quarterly briefings with Members of Congress and their staff members from the states of Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. During these visits to their offices on Capitol Hill, Mr. Raby will provide the Congressional delegations an update on BLM Montana/Dakotas decisions, events, and projects underway in support of the Secretary's priorities including Energy Independence, Shared Conservation Stewardship, Safe Borders, Job Creation, and Serving America. (5/18/18)

**June 13.** BLM-CA. The 30-day public comment period will close on the Bakersfield Field Office's Case Mountain Vegetation and Forest Health Plan environmental assessment (EA) and the unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact for the giant sequoia groves southeast of Three Rivers, in Tulare County. The BLM's proposed action involves a 10-year phased approach starting with road work and roadside thinning; then mechanized extraction, logging and cable yarding within the groves; and ultimately using prescribed controlled burning to improve the vegetation and forest health. The Case Mountain Extensive Recreation Management Area encompasses approximately 18,500 acres of public lands, including the 400-acre Giant Sequoia Complex. This EA includes proposed treatments on private lands to meet the California Environmental Quality Act needs. This proposed action is not controversial, and a decision is expected in fall 2018. (5/18/18)

**June 13 – 14.** BLM-WY. The Joint Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources Interim Committee of the Wyoming Legislature will meet at the BLM Pinedale Field Office. The Field Office will provide a regional update, as is traditional for federal agencies with jurisdiction in the meeting area to do. Likely presentation topics will include: the Riley Ridge to Natrona pipeline project, the Normally Pressured Lance natural gas project, other energy projects, rights of way, grazing permits and other watershed issues. The media and public are likely to attend. No controversy is expected. (5/18/18)

**June 25 – 29.** BLM-CA State Director Jerry Perez plans to conduct courtesy visits with members and staff of the California congressional delegation in Washington D.C. to discuss public land management issues, including oil and gas development, planning efforts, wildfire, renewable energy, and recreation. (5/18/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT will publish the Notice of Establishment and Call for Nominations for the Bears Ears National Monument Advisory Committee. The committee will consist of 15 members representing diverse local community interests and appointed to staggered three-year terms. Members will include representatives from state, local, and tribal governments; the environmental community; the paleontology and archaeology / history field; local business owners; livestock grazing permittees; private landowners; outdoor and commercial recreation interests; and the public-at-large. The call for nominations will be open for 30 days. (5/18/18)  
DTS 2128

**In July.** BLM-UT intends to publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Bears Ears National Monument Proposed Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOA initiates a 90-day public review and comment period. The NOA will be uploaded to DTS when the package is complete and ready for review. (5/18/18)

**In July.** BLM-UT intends to publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Proposed Resource Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Publication of the NOA initiates a 90-day public review and comment period. The NOA will be uploaded to DTS when the package is complete and ready for review. (5/18/18)

**Late July / Early August.** BLM-AK. BLM-AK is tentatively planning to issue the Record of Decision for the Greater Mooses Tooth 2 (GMT2) Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in late July or early August. The 55-day comment period on the draft Supplemental EIS ended May 17. The Supplemental EIS analyzes an application for oil and gas development of the GMT2 production pad in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and supplements an earlier analysis of the project in the 2004 Alpine Satellite Development Plan. Under the preferred alternative identified in the Draft Supplemental EIS, the associated pipeline and access road would cross both Kuukpik Corporation-owned lands and federally-managed lands within the NPR-A. The infrastructure would also connect to the Greater Moose's Tooth 1 development, which is eight miles away. (5/18/18)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**June 8.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will release for public review and comment an Environmental Assessment analyzing a proposal to gather and remove excess wild horses from the Onaqui Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA) and a 10-year plan to maintain appropriate management levels using PZP fertility control and periodic removal of horses. The HMA has a current population of 455 horses with a projected number of 500 with the 2018 foal crop. The BLM proposes to gather and remove approximately 379 horses to reach a low Appropriate Management Level of 121. The Onaqui Mountain HMA is located in Tooele County, Utah, approximately an hour drive from Salt Lake City. The gather will most likely be controversial with horse advocacy groups, range organizations, and the general public due to the HMA's proximity to Salt Lake City and popularity. (4/20/18)

**June 9.** BLM-CO. The 30-day public comment period for the Uncompahgre Field Office's preliminary environmental assessment for Gunnison Energy's North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan near Paonia will close. The public comment period was announced on May 10, 2018. The proposal includes developing 35 Federal oil and gas wells on five well pads, new or upgraded access roads, and new gas and water gathering lines on Federal and private lands. The project would produce approximately 700 billion cubic feet of natural gas over 30 years. (4/24/18)

**Mid-June.** BLM-ID. The Four Rivers Field Office is working toward issuing five Final Grazing Decisions for eight allotments in the Bennett Mountain North area. The permittees involved include Tree Top Ranches, LP; Desert View Ranch, LLC; Iron Horse Ranch, LLC; State of Idaho – Idaho State Department of Agriculture; L. G. Davison and Sons, Inc.; and Faulkner Land and Livestock. Four Rivers Field Manager Brent Ralston will sign the decisions. There is the potential for controversy, as there were protests on the proposed decisions, primarily based on a reduction in AUMs identified. The Final Decisions will reflect the previous permitted use, with the caveat that several allotments that have been used significantly lower those permitted levels for the last 10+ years. There is a term and condition limiting annual use to a lower AUM level

with the provision that during higher than normal precipitation years (i.e., more vegetation growth), allowed use could reflect total permitted levels with prior Field Manager approval. (5/11/18)

**June 20.** BLM-CA. The Ridgecrest Field Office anticipates publishing a draft Environmental Assessment for the Keystone Exploratory Drilling Project, located on existing un-patented lode mining claims on public lands administered by the Ridgecrest Field Office. The project is located within California Desert National Conservation Lands and in the Cerro Gordo-Conglomerat Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The National Park Service is a cooperating agency on the joint document because of water rights to a spring and an existing a water pipeline that crosses the Death Valley National Park. All drilling will occur outside the park and will be supported by existing roads and pads, with several of the drill sites being in existing road surfaces. Less than an acre of new disturbance is anticipated. This project has the potential to draw negative attention from environmental organizations. (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM State, District, and Field Offices anticipate beginning field-level review of a revised draft of H-4150, Unauthorized Grazing Use. The handbook is being updated to respond to GAO Report-16-559, Unauthorized Grazing, which included a recommendation to revise the BLM's Unauthorized Grazing Use Handbook to make it consistent with 43 CFR 4100. The handbook was last released in 1977 and 1984. The completion date for revision is March 31, 2019. This handbook aims to help field managers comply with 43 CFR 4150 for procedural direction and standards for prevention and control of unauthorized grazing use on BLM-administered lands. (5/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register Notice announcing a Call for Nominations and Comments on tracts available for leasing for the 2018 National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) oil and gas lease sale. Publication of the Notice begins a 30-day comment/nomination period. The BLM is required to publish the Notice of Sale at least 30 days before the sale. BLM-AK has corresponded sale dates with the State of Alaska's lease sales since 2010, generally during November or December each year. The State of Alaska will offer lease tracts adjacent to the NPR-A on that coordinated date. A briefing paper on the litigation of Determination of NEPA Adequacy from the 2016 and 2017 lease sales is included in the package outlining the two lawsuits. All parties have agreed to an expedited briefing schedule that will conclude Aug. 7, 2018 for the court to make a determination. The NPR-A is exempt from Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and it is not a multiple-use unit guided by a resource management plan. Instead, the BLM utilizes an "integrated activity plan" or IAP. Each lease sale goes through a review to determine NEPA adequacy and the 2018 lease sale is expected to follow the same process as all annual lease sales since 2011, when they were directed by Presidential Order. (5/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Fortymile River System in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 2,084 acres (86 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting

the State of Alaska and BLM. The Notice of Application for an RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. (4/26/18)

**In June.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Egegik River, Becharof Lake, and Ruth Lake and Outlet in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that these waters are navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the State's application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title and restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 290,983 acres of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The [2005 Bristol Bay Area Plan](#) from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources identified some mineral potential in the areas surrounding Egegik River and Becharof Lake. The plan also gives a summary of the region. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-AK is preparing a Federal Register notice for the State of Alaska's application for a Recordable Disclaimer of Interest (RDI) for lands underlying the Taku River in Alaska. The State of Alaska asserts that the Taku River is navigable and title to the bed passed to the State on the date of statehood (1959). If BLM-AK approves the application, the decision document will issue a disclaimer. These disclaimers help remove perceived clouds over the State's title to the bed of the navigable waters and to restore the State's sovereignty over their lands. There are approximately 36,160 acres (35 river miles) of submerged lands impacted by this decision, primarily affecting the State of Alaska and the U.S. Forest Service. The Notice of Application for a RDI is to inform the public of the pending application and the State of Alaska's supporting evidence, as well as to provide the opportunity to comment or provide additional information to the BLM. The BLM will not make a final decision on the merits of the State's application before 90 days from publication of the notice. The notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/13/18) DTS 2055

**In June.** BLM-AZ. BLM Arizona will publish its Record of Decision (ROD) for Recreational Target Shooting in the Sonoran Desert National Monument. A March 2015 federal court order required the BLM to re-analyze impacts of recreational target shooting on the monument. The ROD, which was developed after extensive public outreach and analysis, preserves access for target shooting on nearly 90% of the monument, while ensuring public safety in the area of heaviest family recreation use—the Juan Bautista de Anza Recreation Management Zone (RMZ). The ROD was filed with U.S. District Court in Phoenix on March 5, 2018, and the announcement will coincide with publication of the Notice of the Availability in the Federal Register. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (3/7/18) DTS 1976

**In June.** BLM-ES anticipates publishing in the Federal Register a Notice to reoffer a coal lease sale of 160 acres of Federal mineral estate in Jefferson, County, Alabama. The Federal tract (ALES 55199) is adjacent to the existing Narley Mine No. 3 (fee land) permitted under the Alabama Surface Mining Commission. The tract would provide approximately 469,000 recoverable tons of federal coal. BLM-ES anticipates conducting a competitive coal lease sale in July 2018, on a date TBD within the timeframe allowed following publication of the Federal Register notice. The Federal tract was originally offered for competitive sale on April 14, 2016. The single bid received from Best Coal, Inc. did not meet the approved Fair Market Value (minimum bid). The BLM updated its previous Fair Market Value analysis and received concurrence from the Office of Valuation Services on March 30, 2018, clearing the way for the re-offer. The Federal Register notice correspondence file was routed for review by the Office of the Solicitor on April 30, 2018. (4/4/18) DTS 14231

**In June.** BLM-ES is working with the U.S. Coast Guard on a withdrawal revocation package for Lot 22 of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (ONA), Florida. The package was sent April 12, 2018 to the Knoxville Field Solicitor's Office for legal sufficiency review. The BLM is the primary administrator of the 120-acre ONA, engaging in shared stewardship of the site in collaboration with local partners. The U.S. Coast Guard submitted a Notice of Intent to Relinquish Lot 22 (16.41 acres) to the BLM in June 2017. Lot 22 includes the lighthouse, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and receives more than 75,000 visitors annually. The BLM is currently in the suitability determination phase of the relinquishment, which includes an environmental assessment, preparation of a suitability report, completion of a NEPA compliance document, and publication of a Notice in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**In June.** BLM-MT/DK. The Lewistown Field Office is preparing a Notice of Realty Action for Federal Register publication announcing the BLM's classification of 80 acres at Bynum Reservoir in Teton County, Mont., as suitable for conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The Federal Register Notice will also inform the public that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) has applied to have the land conveyed from the BLM to MFWP. MFWP has maintained a fishing and recreation access site on Bynum Reservoir for over 20 years with a right-of-way from the BLM. The BLM Lewistown Field Office will convey the 80 acres to MFWP under the condition that the State will never sell the land or change its current recreational use; otherwise the land will return to the BLM. The package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18) DTS 2130

**In June.** BLM-NV. The Tonopah Field Office is proposing a non-competitive (direct) sale of 221.68 acres of public land to Esmeralda County to resolve inadvertent unauthorized occupancy issues within the historic mining town of Gold Point. The parcel would be sold at the appraised fair market value. The BLM will open a 45-day public comment period on the sale, with an aim to publish the Federal Register notice by mid May. The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. The Federal Register package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/11/18) DTS 2015

**In June.** BLM-NV. The Tonopah Field Office is proposing a non-competitive (direct) sale of 221.68 acres of public land to Esmeralda County to resolve inadvertent unauthorized occupancy issues within the historic mining town of Gold Point. The parcel would be sold at the appraised

fair market value. The BLM will open a 45-day public comment period on the sale, with an aim to publish the Federal Register notice by mid May. The sale is not anticipated to be controversial. The Federal Register package is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/11/18) DTS 2015

**In June.** BLM-NV. The Ely District will release the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Gold Rock Mine Project. The BLM will not issue a final decision on the proposed project for a minimum of 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The proposed project would add 300 direct jobs during construction and 150 to 250 direct jobs during peak mining operations. The project is located 50 west of Ely and 30 miles southeast of Eureka in rural White Pine County, Nevada. White Pine County and Eureka County are supportive of the project and the local rural economic development it will bring. Local livestock grazing permittees have expressed concern about the loss of forage within the fenced mine area, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife has expressed concerns about the project in regard to impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse and crucial mule deer winter habitat. The mining company has included voluntary mitigation to reduce these impacts. The Notice is under review in Washington, D.C. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT is considering the non-competitive, direct sale to PacifiCorp of 200 acres of public land in Emery County, Utah, at not less than the appraised fair market value. The proposed sale is in conformance with the October 2008 Price Field Office Resource Management Plan. The lands would be offered to PacifiCorp non-competitively due to the lack of public access and their ownership of the surrounding lands, pursuant to 43 CFR 2711.3-3(a)(4). Conveyance of the identified public lands would be subject to valid existing rights and encumbrances of record. (3/7/18) DTS 1984

**In June.** BLM-UT expects to approve a Final Environmental Impact Statement for Alton Coal, which seeks to expand its existing mine by leasing federal coal on 3,581 acres of public and private lands near Alton, Utah. The Alton Coal Tract contains 59.6 million tons of bituminous coal, and the proposed action could extend mining operations by 25 years. The lease sale needs to occur by summer 2018 for continuous operations. (2/21/18) DTS 2032

**In June.** BLM-WY expects to publish the Notice of Availability for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Normally Pressured Lance (NPL) Project. The Federal Register package is currently under review in Washington D.C. The proposed project includes drilling up to 3,500 directional natural gas wells over a 10-year period on approximately 140,000 acres. The NPL project is projected to yield between 3.5 to 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and between 17.5 to 140 million barrels of oil over its estimated 40-year life. Project revenues are estimated at \$17.8 billion with federal royalties amounting to about \$2.2 billion, of which about \$1.1 billion would go to the State of Wyoming. The project would also bring about 954 full time jobs to the region during development. (2/21/18)

**July 9.** BLM-CO. The Tres Rios Field Office will announce a 30-day public comment period on its proposal to use bait and/or water trapping as the preferred method for future removal of wild horses from the Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area. The proposal includes continuing to treat mares with fertility control to slow population growth. The appropriate management

level for the HMA is between 35 and 65 animals. The BLM estimates the Spring Creek Basin herd is at the high AML for the HMA. (4/4/18)

**July 29.** BLM-NV. A temporary closure order is proposed to go into effect for the annual Burning Man event on the Black Rock Playa in the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon – Emigrant Trail National Conservation Area. The temporary closure provides protection for public safety and resources before, during, and after the event. The closure area is focused on the event site only and leaves the vast majority of the Black Rock Playa open for public use. The Federal Register notice announcing the closure would be published on June 22. Burning Man is the largest special recreation permit issued by the BLM. This arts and lifestyle festival brings 70,000 participants to BLM-managed public land for the week leading up to the Labor Day weekend. This year's event is from Aug. 24 – Sep. 4. (5/11/18) DTS 2121

**In July.** BLM-AZ. The Lower Sonoran Field Office will release the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) related to development of the proposed Sonoran Valley Parkway Project (SVPP) by the City of Goodyear in Maricopa County, Arizona. This project provides the opportunity to create immediate and future jobs, help bolster the growing local economy, and reduce emergency service response times. The City has approximately 77,000 residents and is part of the Phoenix-metropolitan area, which has approximately 4.5 million residents. The SVPP will provide needed enhancements to infrastructure as the area is projected to experience significant growth. The proposed project would involve approximately 475 acres of BLM-managed public lands. The package was returned to BLM-AZ for revisions. (4/4/18) DTS 1775

**In July.** BLM-UT. The BLM Moab Field Office intends to issue two EAs for public review and comment. The two EAs analyze potential impacts of proposed grazing permit renewals as follows: 1) Seven allotments totaling approximately 55,470 acres in the Dolores Triangle area of Grand County, and 2) Two allotments totaling approximately 18,400 acres in northern San Juan County in the Lisbon Valley area. These proposals are not controversial with the public but are controversial with Western Watersheds Project and groups associated with them just by the nature that they deal with grazing. Letters will be sent to interested publics and those that commented during scoping, press releases are not anticipated at this time. (4/4/18)

**Late July.** BLM-AK. The BLM is preparing a joint Record of Decision (ROD) on Donlin Gold with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Joe Balash will sign for the BLM. BLM-AK plans to have a briefing package for Acting BLM-AK State Director Karen Mouritsen's review by mid-May. BLM Project Manager Laurie Thorpe continues meeting with key interdisciplinary staff and the State of Alaska Pipeline Coordination Section staff to further develop the right of way (ROW) stipulations across the multiple landowner jurisdiction. On May 21-22, key players with the Corps, BLM, and State Historic Preservation Officer will do a final review of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA). On May 23, the PA will be distributed for signature and will be an appendix to the joint ROD. Donlin Gold LLC applied for permits for an open-pit, hardrock gold mine in southwest Alaska. The site will include waste treatment and waste rock facilities, a mill, and a natural-gas-powered power plant. BLM-AK has been participating as a cooperating agency and is responsible for ROW authorization. Donlin Gold applied for a ROW on the 316-mile proposed natural gas pipeline which would cross approximately 92 miles and 4,322 acres of largely remote and undisturbed BLM-managed lands. The affected public lands

are under a 1981 Management Framework Plan and the area is included in the Bering Sea/Western Interior Resource Management Plan, currently under development. (3/1/18)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

**June 7.** BLM-CO will hold its quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The BLM is offering 64 parcels totaling approximately 58,694 acres in Jackson, Moffat, Rio Blanco and Routt counties. Approximately 30,898 acres are on Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, which could generate controversy. Oil and gas leasing and development in Colorado generated an estimated \$2.9 billion in economic output in fiscal year 2016. (4/24/18)

**June 8 – 25.** BLM-ID. The BLM Challis Field Office anticipates posting the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Spar Canyon Right of Way on ePlanning the week of June 8, with an anticipated signed Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact from both BLM and BPA released the week of June 25. In 2014, BPA proposed to improve the access road system for its existing Spar Canyon-Round Valley transmission line located on BLM-managed land in Custer County. BPA and BLM are working on the NEPA document together. BPA's proposal would involve constructing 4-6 miles of new road, reinforcing road crossings at drainages with rock, and acquiring access rights from BLM for new road use. This decision includes required mitigation related to sage-grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment for approximately 4.4 acres. BPA supports the mitigation plan and is working with the Governor's Office of Species Conservation to contribute funding for an off-site mitigation project. (5/11/18)

**June 9.** BLM-NM is proposing to invite the public to visit Sabinoso Wilderness for National Get Outdoors Day, a new annual event to encourage healthy, active outdoor fun. Sabinoso Wilderness recently became accessible to the public for hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities. The 16,000-acre Sabinoso was previously wholly surrounded by non-federal land making it inaccessible to the general public. Access to this remote area was made possible by Secretary Zinke's acceptance of a donation by of 3,595 acres adjacent to Sabinoso Wilderness. The event will include organized hikes for the public in the Wilderness. (4/26/18)

**June 12.** BLM-NV will hold an online oil and gas lease sale for parcels in the Battle Mountain District. Leases on 166 parcels totaling 313,715.31 acres will be auctioned in Eureka, Lander and Nye Counties. The protest period ended May 7. Four protests have been received from the following groups: Basin and Range Watch, Center for Biological Diversity, Wild Earth Guardians, and the Wilderness Society. (5/11/18)

**June 12.** BLM-UT will hold a quarterly oil and gas lease sale. The Color Country District posted the Notice of Competitive Lease Sale on April 26, 2018. The district proposes to lease four parcels totaling approximately 3,788 acres in Wayne, Sevier and Beaver counties, Utah. The June lease sale also includes eight parcels in the Vernal Field Office that were sold during the December 2017 oil and gas lease sale but for which timely payment was not made by the successful bidder. As outlined under 43 CFR 3120.5-3C, the BLM must consider re-offering the parcels at the next feasible lease sale. The Vernal Field Office completed a Determination of NEPA Adequacy based on the EA prepared for the December 2017 lease sale and the BLM is re-offering the eight parcels. (4/26/18)



**June 14.** BLM-CA. The 90-day public comment period will end for the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft Land Use Plan Amendment for the West Mojave Route Network Project. The Draft Supplemental EIS addresses proposed solutions for adaptive and responsible travel management planning and recreational use — including off-highway vehicle access — within the West Mojave planning area, while protecting important resources. (4/20/18)

**June 15.** BLM-CA. Bakersfield Field Office staff will meet at Case Mountain Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA) with representatives of local Native American tribes to discuss the final details in the process to designate approximately 110 miles of multi-use, non-motorized trails. Case Mountain ERMA attracts a diverse group of public land users and is especially popular with recreationalists who come to enjoy the Sierra foothills scenery and challenging single-track trail system. (5/11/18)

**Mid-June.** BLM-ID is formalizing the partnership between the BLM and the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) to establish a general framework for cooperation concerning illegal activities like trash dumping and off-road abuse resulting in natural resource damage on public lands in Idaho. The partnership will focus on BHA and BLM working cooperatively to inform the public of the problems caused by illegal activity. BHA has offered to establish a rewards program as an incentive for the public to report illegal dumping and off-road abuse on public lands. The BLM will provide a “hotline” reporting number that law enforcement will monitor and then follow up with the reporting party to acquire details of the incident and determine if further investigation is required. An MOU signing is anticipated for mid-June. (5/11/18)

**Mid-June.** BLM-UT. The Cedar City Field Office will release for public review and comment an Environmental Assessment analyzing a proposal to gather excess wild horses from the North Hills Joint Management Area multiple times over a 10-year period. The initial gather would include removal of excess wild horses. Subsequent gathers could include population control actions such as fertility vaccine treatments and adjustments of stud-to-mare ratio. The joint management area is approximately 74,000 acres in size and consists of the North Hills Herd Management Area and North Hills Wild Horse Territory in the BLM Cedar City Field Office and the Forest Service Pine Valley Ranger District. Current estimated population is 212 with a projected number of 254 by February 2019. The BLM proposes to gather and remove approximately 214 horses to reach the low Appropriate Management Level of 40. This gather will most likely not be controversial, as it is supported by local permittees. (5/11/18)

**June 20 – 21.** BLM-WY. The BLM Wyoming State Office will hold its quarterly online oil and gas lease sale, which will include 162 parcels totaling 198,589 acres. BLM-WY received nominations for 178 parcels containing 227,503 acres. One whole parcel and portions of three additional parcels totaling 2,212 acres were deferred because they are located in the State of Wyoming Version 4 Core Area Maps, but are not in Priority Habitat Management Areas in the BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plans. (Version 4 Core area maps are the most recent maps produced by the state of Wyoming identifying priority habitat management areas for Greater Sage-grouse, also known as core areas.) Twelve additional whole parcels and portions of six additional parcels were deleted because they are closed to leasing in the Approved Resource Management Plans. Forty-four parcels totaling 57,480 acres are located in Greater Sage-Grouse Priority Habitat Management Areas. Eighty-nine parcels totaling 99,255

acres are located within General Habitat Management Areas. Thirty parcels totaling 42,563 acres have portions located in both Priority and General habitat Management Areas. The sale protest period will end on May 14. (5/11/18)

**June 21.** BLM-ES will hold a competitive online oil and gas lease sale of 24 parcels, all of which are split estate with private surface. The combined parcels total 2,202.87 acres and are located in Cleburne and Van Buren Counties, Arkansas. The sale noticed was published on April 10, beginning a 10-day protest period that ended April 20. No protests have been received. BLM-ES issued an amendment to the sale notice on April 30, adding a split-estate 5-acre tract in Louisiana to the sale. (4/11/18)

**June 21 – 24.** BLM-AK. The Glennallen Field Office will partner with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing to host wounded veterans in the Delta Wild and Scenic River corridor. This event provides physical and emotional rehabilitation for wounded soldiers, veterans, and their families. Participants will exercise fly-fishing techniques honed over winter and experience the rich, aquatic habitat of the Delta Wild and Scenic River and Tangle Lakes Archaeological District. [www.projecthealingwaters.org](http://www.projecthealingwaters.org) (5/4/18)

**June 24.** BLM-ID. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), through the BLM, is requesting approval of a Public Land Order (PLO) that would withdraw 107.02 acres of USFS-administered lands within the Salmon-Challis National Forest from settlement, sale, location or entry under the public land laws, including the U.S. mining laws, for a period of 20 years. The purpose of the withdrawal is to conserve the hydrologic values and fishery in the Salmon River watershed through protection of the USFS Dump Creek Diversion Ditch, a \$2.4-million canal that is part of a larger infrastructure network designed to protect recreational opportunities on the Salmon River. The land was segregated from the mining laws through 81 CFR 41333, which will automatically expire on June 24, 2018, after which the lands will be open to location and entry under the U.S. mining laws. No controversy regarding the withdrawal is expected. The USFS completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and offered to hold public meetings through local papers and the Federal Register. No groups or individuals requested a public meeting, and no substantial comments were received on the EA. (5/4/18) DTS Lands 167

**June 27 – 28.** BLM-NV. The Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council proposes to meet in Caliente, NV. Agenda items include updates on the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area recreation fee business plan, utility and transmission corridors planning updates, wildlife management and a tour of the Lincoln County Trail System. (4/20/18)

**June 30.** BLM-CA. Bakersfield Field Office staff will participate in a U.S. Forest Service-led public meeting on four Applications for Permit to Drill in the Sespe oilfield in Fillmore, Calif. The Forest Service is the lead federal agency conducting the NEPA and the meeting is expected to generate much public interest, including previous interest from U.S. Rep. Julia Brownley's (CA-26-D) office, due to the wells being in a national forest and near a California condor sanctuary. (2/9/18)

**In June.** BLM-CA. The Barstow Field Office anticipates release of a Street Legal Only Environmental Assessment for County-maintained roads on BLM-managed public lands in San Bernardino County. This action is at the request of the County, and initiates a 30-day public

comment period. The BLM portion of the roads maintained by the County are not covered by any BLM authorization. The BLM has been in discussions with the County concerning obtaining proper right-of-way authorization. (5/11/18)

**In June.** BLM-CA. The BLM anticipates publishing in the Federal Register a 60-day notice to seek public comment on a proposed direct sale of 70 acres of public land in San Bernardino County to OMYA Inc., a global producer of calcium carbonate and distributor of specialty chemicals. The proposed land sale would allow the company to continue mining the high-calcium limestone deposits in the area through 2055, resolve past unauthorized mining operations, and meet OMYA's need for additional land. This proposal would also be consistent with the Amended Mining and Reclamation Plan approved by the County of San Bernardino. Located in the vicinity of Lucerne Valley, OMYA Inc.'s mining operation generates more than \$800,000 per year in county taxes and provides jobs for approximately 100 workers from the surrounding communities. (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-CO. The Gunnison Field Office (GFO) is preparing a Notice of Availability (NOA) and preliminary Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on its proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment to assess domestic sheep permit renewals on 16 livestock grazing allotments in Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Juan counties. The EIS evaluates reducing contact between domestic sheep on BLM-managed lands and wild sheep populations to minimize disease transmission. GFO is planning for a June 2018 publication (pending WO and DOI approval) in the Federal Register. (4/11/18)

**In June.** BLM-ES will submit a Federal Register notice for a solicitation for bids for a competitive 10-year renewable lease of the Equestrian Facility at the Meadowood Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) near Lorton, Va. The lease will be issued under Section 302 of the Federal Land and Policy Management Act (FLPMA), and 43 CFR 2920. Issuance of the lease will bring BLM-ES in compliance with BLM IM 2016-030, "Guidance for Issuing Commercial Leases for Recreation-Related Businesses," promulgated in response to the Office of Inspector General's March 30, 2015 report, "Review of Bureau of Land Management's Concession Management Practices." (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-ID. The Four Rivers Field Office is working with the Land Trust of Treasure Valley (LTTV) on the acquisition of 560 acres in the Boise Foothills. The LTTV purchased the property in February 2018 and will transfer the parcel to the BLM through a bargain sale agreement. BLM Idaho intends to use FY17 Land and Water Conservation Fund Recreation Access funds for this purchase. These funds were available because the appraisal for another FY17 project came in lower than expected, which resulted in excess funds. The property is a critical piece that will provide public access to public lands in the Stack Rock area from the Avimor trail system. This property was identified in the Ridge to Rivers 10-Year Management Plan (in which the BLM is a managing partner) as a high-priority objective for obtaining public access for hunters and other recreationists. The property is also important winter range for big game, especially elk, and is in the most popular big game hunting unit in Idaho. The LTTV issued a press release on April 4 regarding their purchase of this property. A BLM press release will likely be issued in June when scoping is initiated, and again when the purchase takes place in late summer or early fall 2018. This final release could include statements from the Secretary, the BLM, the City of Boise, and/or Avimor. (4/4/18)

**In June.** BLM-MT/DK. The Missoula Field Office will hold the Black Sheep Timber Sale to salvage timber from BLM lands within the perimeter of the Little Hogback fire near Ram Mountain. The Little Hogback fire burned 43,733 acres in July 2017, of which 3,766 acres was on BLM-administered lands managed by the Missoula Field Office. The Field Office will be salvaging fire-burned and beetle-killed timber from 250 acres within the fire perimeter. The Field Office anticipates a yield of 1,500 to 2,000 MBF, which equates to about 500 log truckloads. This sale is not expected to generate any controversy. (3/16/18)

**In June.** BLM-NV. Secretary Zinke will be requested to sign the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 17 projects for funding. There are two Nevada signing event options: 1) Southern Nevada at Bureau of Reclamation for their Round 17 Capital Improvement Program (more than \$10 million at the dam); or 2) Northern Nevada at BLM-NV land acquisition (\$4.5 million - providing new recreation opportunity) and nearby fuels projects (\$5 million). The Executive Committee for SNPLMA requested the Interior Secretary approve \$78,002,276 of funding, including \$5 million for a Special Account Reserve and an additional \$3.2 million for SNPLMA Round 16B Craig Ranch Regional Park—a 20.57-acre acquisition project. SNPLMA funding advances the Secretary's priorities by creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt; restoring trust and being a good neighbor; modernizing our infrastructure; achieving our goals; and leading our team forward. (3/23/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office will issue an EA for a 30-day public comment period. The EA analyzes a proposal from Grand County to create a small detention basin on public lands as part of a flood control project near the south end of Moab, Utah. Past flooding has affected local neighborhoods and U.S. Route 191 in this area. The construction of the basin will entail a minor reroute of an existing mountain bike connector trail. (4/20/18)

**In June.** BLM-UT. The Moab Field Office intends to issue a decision authorizing a Special Recreation Permit to Pinnacle Helicopters LLC for a shuttle service for river clients from the Canyonlands Field Airport to Mineral Bottom Airstrip. The proposal is controversial due to potential impacts to other visitors' experiences, and an unrelated proposal from the same company to also conduct helicopter shuttles in Blue John Canyon, immediately south of Canyonlands National Park and near the Horseshoe Canyon Wilderness Study Area managed by the BLM Richfield Field Office. That request garnered regional media attention. (3/7/18)

**In June or July.** BLM-UT. The Salt Lake Field Office will finalize the Skull Valley land exchange. This exchange is a single-transaction, multi-parcel exchange wherein the United States would convey 12,603.27 acres of Federal land for 11,586.32 acres of non-Federal land. The exchange would consolidate Federal and non-Federal ownership, provide management efficiency, and increase public access opportunities. The BLM would acquire 3,598 acres of mule deer crucial range, 1,417 acres of pronghorn crucial range, a 120-acre portion of the Pony Express National Historic Trail, and 587 acres of inholdings within the Cedar Mountain Wilderness Area. This acquisition of lands in a wilderness area would be important for providing improved public access to an area that is popular with hunters, minimizing the complexity of BLM's fire suppression responsibility in a fire-prone area, and reducing the burden to a private landowner with inholdings in a wilderness area. (4/11/18)

**July 8.** BLM-CO. The 90-day public review period will close for the Little Snake Field Office's 1,870-mile route inventory across 638,195 acres of BLM-managed land. The review period began on April 9, 2018. This is the third and final Field Office travel management area to undergo this first public step of travel management. The public is being asked to review the inventory for accuracy and completeness, giving them the opportunity to help finalize a working map of the routes for the planning effort. The public will have several opportunities for review as the process to designate routes progresses over the next year. (3/30/18)

**July 9.** BLM-UT. The Fillmore Field Office expects to approve a Plan of Operations for the Scipio Pass Quarry located in Millard County. A Plan of Operations for this new project was submitted on April 17, 2018, by Clyde Companies. The Fillmore Field Office will provide comments to Clyde prior to the regulatory 30-day deadline. The 120-acre quarry will produce limestone aggregate for highway construction projects, so it has potential for local employment and therefore, local support. This project may become controversial due to its size and proximity to Interstate 15 at Scipio Pass and it is anticipated that environmental organizations and Tribes may not support the project. Potential issues include visual, cultural, air quality, and wildlife. The Plan of Operations and subsequent Environmental Assessment will include public review and comment. (4/26/18)

**July 12 – 17.** The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) 2018 Annual Conference will be held in Eugene, Oregon. This Annual Conference will bring together over 300 U.S. and Canadian fish and wildlife regulators to discuss shared biological, management, and land use issues. This event attracts professional fish and wildlife biologists (including commissioners and directors from over 20 states), managers, administrators, and others in fish and wildlife related fields. A conference approval package is being prepared. (4/26/18)

**July 17 – 18.** BLM-NV. The Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) proposes to hold a meeting in Elko. Agenda items include wildfire and wildlife management, district reports and a presentation on the IL Ranch conservation program. The RAC will take a field trip on the second day to the IL Ranch, a facility owned and operated by Newmont Mining Company. The field trip will include a tour of the ranch and associated facilities and an update on the ranch's habitat restoration projects. (4/20/18)

**July 20.** BLM-ID. The Bruneau Field Office is considering whether to renew the Battle Creek, East Castle Creek, and Owens grazing allotments in Owyhee County for a term of 10 years. The area covers 244,529 acres and there are nine affected permittees. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared to disclose and analyze the impacts of renewing the grazing permits. The EA will provide a range of alternatives aimed at flexible and economically sustainable grazing authorizations, adaptive management, opportunities to reduce cheatgrass, and enhancing riparian areas. The proposed decisions on whether to renew the grazing permits are anticipated to be issued by July 20. (5/4/18)

**July 20 – 30.** BLM-CO will issue the sale notice and 10-day protest period for the Sep. 6, 2018 oil and gas lease sale for 25 parcels totaling approximately 217,622 acres in Huerfano, Kiowa, Lincoln, Washington and Weld Counties. Eleven parcels totaling approximately 18,358 acres in Huerfano County outside and east of Great Sand Dunes National Park's boundary have received significant media coverage. The Huerfano County parcels, because of their proximity to Great

Sand Dunes National Park, have generated ongoing controversy since the public comment period for the sale's environmental assessment was announced. The announcement date and length of the protest period follows guidance in IM 2018-034. (4/4/18)

**July 22 – 26.** BLM-OR/WA. The Rural Sociological Society's national meeting will take place in Portland, Ore. During the meeting, Burns District BLM Manager Jeff Rose will participate in a panel discussion that will address local, regional, and national implications of the 2016 Malheur occupation, with a particular focus on science and its relationship with environmental concerns, tribal rights, livelihoods, populism, fairness, and other questions in public lands management. Jeff Rose is currently working on his remarks for the meeting. (4/11/18)

**In July.** BLM-UT. The BLM-UT State Office will terminate the San Rafael Swell Master Leasing Plan Amendment process. Since the publication of the Notice of Intent for this plan, BLM Washington Office Instruction Memo 2018-034 was issued, terminating the Master Leasing Plan process. A Federal Register Notice of Termination has been submitted to WO-630 for processing. There are no plans for a press release or public meeting as this is an administrative action. (4/26/18) DTS 2105

**August 1.** BLM-MT/DK. The Western Montana District is proposing to complete a fee purchase acquisition using approved Land and Water Conservation Fund funding in the amount of \$1,025,000. The privately owned 307.57-acre parcel is located 23 miles south of Ennis, Montana. The parcel lies adjacent to BLM-administered lands (Dillon Field Office) within the Upper River Special Recreation Management Area along the Madison River. There would be increased access to 880 acres of BLM-managed lands, which would provide approximately 4.5 miles of additional access to the Madison River. The proposed date for this acquisition is Aug. 1, 2018. Willing landowners would like to complete the transaction as soon as possible. The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Madison County Commissioners support the BLM acquiring the private parcel. An appraisal, NEPA analysis, and Endangered Species Act work have been completed. No controversy is expected. (3/7/18)

#### Bureau of Offshore Energy Management

#### **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

**In June 2018,** BOEM expects to publish a Request for Competitive Interest for an area proposed to be used for a right-of-way (ROW) project called Atlantic Link. Clean Power Northeast Development, Inc. filed an application on May 31, 2017 (revised August 22, and September 26), for a ROW grant in support of a proposed project connecting onshore wind and hydro power in Canada to the Massachusetts market via a 350 mile HvDC submarine cable traversing the OCS. The notice is in surnaming with ASLM.

#### **ONGOING ITEMS**

**In May 2018**, Deepwater Wind is expected to submit a Construction and Operations Plan (COP) for their South Fork project located offshore New York. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for this COP is in surnaming with ASLM. BOEM has deemed the EIS to be unusually complex and is drafting a page limit waiver per the Department's April 27 guidance. (4/27/18)

**By the end of May**, BOEM expects that NMFS could publish its Endangered Species Act Biological Opinion for eight Atlantic G&G permit applications under review by BOEM. In testimony on April 26, NMFS indicated it would issue the IHAs in a few weeks, and after the BiOp is complete. It will not issue an IHA for one of the applications, submitted by WesternGeco, as they have not completed the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) consultation for BOEM's permit process. States were notified of the Austin Bridgeport airborne gravity and magnetic permit for CZMA purposes on February 22, 2018. On March 26, 2018, the State of Florida requested through NOAA an unlisted activity review for Austin Bridgeport's permit. NOAA has indicated that the decision to grant the State of Florida a consistency review will be made by May 23, 2018. BOEM's decision on the permits should take approximately three weeks after BiOp completion, and will include issuance of an EA for each permit. (4/12/18)

**In early June 2018**, BOEM and BSEE expect to publish a Notice of Availability for a joint draft Programmatic EA for routine and ongoing oil and gas activities occurring in the Southern California Planning Area. BSEE has commenced the NOA surnaming process including a 30-day public comment period for the draft EA. The Draft Programmatic EA is expected to be published later this spring and the Final Programmatic EA should be complete by the end of FY 2018. (4/6/18)

**On June 15**, BOEM will meet with representatives from the State of Hawaii and staff from Hawaiian Congressional member state offices to discuss potential paths forward for the competitive planning and leasing process for offshore wind following a February 2017 response from DoD excluding much of the June 2016 Call for Information and Nominations Area as part of DoD's mission compatibility assessment. (4/27/18)

#### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

#### **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

The Solicitor's Office sent a memorandum and proposed settlement agreement to the DOJ recommending settlement of the three Farrell-Cooper cases. There is currently a stay of the district court litigation until May 24, 2018, in one of the cases, pending finalization of the settlement agreement. (5/14/2018)

**Evans-McCurtain Mine** is a proposed new coal mine operation located in the state of Oklahoma of approximately 1,300 acres. BLM is holding a cooperating agency NEPA workshop the week of June 11, 2018, to begin work on development of the leasing NEPA document. Similar to Pollyanna #8 (see above), this NEPA document will analyze both leasing

and mining plan decision document effects. This collaboration will reduce time frames after the lease is issued and the mining plan decision document can begin. The remaining reserves on the proposed lease are recoverable only by underground methods. Coal thickness will dictate the use of continuous miner units or, possibly, a plow longwall. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (5/16/2018)

OSMRE staff met on May 15, 2018, to discuss the development of a response letter to Farrell-Cooper Mining Company's (FCMC) letter dated May 3, 2018, to Acting Director Owens requesting that OSMRE reinstate the processing of a Mine Plan Decision Document (MPDD) for Mining Unit E at its Brazil Creek - Shady Point Mine. The MPDD had been held in abeyance since June 2016 over concerns about the company's reclamation plan regarding a stream classified in the permit as ephemeral. Available evidence strongly supports classification of the stream as intermittent for most of its length, which would by regulation require a change in the reclamation plan. In rechecking with the Oklahoma Department of Mines on the state's position regarding the mining permit issued in January, 2016, OSMRE was informed that the state will only require a mine plan change for the reclamation of the stream if required by the MPDD. With that added clarity of the state's position OSMRE's staff will reinstate the MPDD process for the ASLM's review. OSMRE staff will immediately begin work on drafting a response to the FCMC letter, updating the previous draft Environmental Assessment (EA) developed in June, 2016 for NEPA and re-posting of a 30-day public notice. (5/16/2018)

BLM has provided a draft MOU to OSMRE and to the Oklahoma Department of Mines (ODM), requesting the agencies' participation in BLM's NEPA review process relating to Federal coal mineral leasing. Unlike previous MOUs between BLM and OSMRE in the Mid-Continent Region which were issued project by project, this document is intended to serve as an umbrella MOU for all related BLM coal mineral leasing activities in the State of Oklahoma. As indicated, this new draft MOU also formally includes ODM as a cooperating agency. OSMRE and ODM provided comments on the draft MOU the week of May 7, 2018. OSMRE anticipates the final MOU will be ready for signature by **June 30, 2018.** (5/16/2018)

## ONGOING ITEMS

**By June 30, 2018,** OSMRE expects the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to complete a lease for the Oklahoma Federal Lands: **Pollyanna #8 coal mine** permit revision. The applicant's existing coal reserves are expected to be depleted in less than 12 months; therefore, the additional coal reserve is needed to ensure continuous operations. BLM has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the coal lease on the expansion of the underground mine and is expected to have the draft lease completed in the upcoming weeks. With finalization of the leasing documents, OSMRE will be working on the development of a Mine Plan Decision Document (MPDD). Based upon OSMRE's close coordination with BLM during the development of the EA for the lease, we anticipate being able to adopt large portions of their EA for our MPDD. Future steps will include evaluation of the BLM EA for determination of NEPA adequacy, developing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EA, if needed, expected to be completed within 2 weeks following draft lease, followed by developing the EA and posting it for public



review. Depending upon how much of the BLM EA that is adopted, the MPDD could be completed by July 31, 2018. (4/3/2018)

**By June 30, 2018**, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expected to have an Interdisciplinary Team meeting for the development of the NEPA document and coal lease package for the **Liberty #8** coal mine. The new lease by application covers 1,620 acres of surface mining activities. OSMRE is expected to be a cooperating agency on the NEPA document. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss with the mining company processing procedures, outline NEPA responsibilities, the development of a schedule associated with leasing and the process of a mining plan decision document. As BLM is the lead on arranging this meeting we will report further on this issue when we become aware of more specific details. (4/3/2018)

Pending a state approval of the permit revision on or around June 15, OSMRE plans to submit the Falkirk Mine's mining plan decision document to headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM on or around **June 25**. Falkirk Mining Company's Falkirk Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in McLean County, ND. The mine employs 412 full-time employees and 118 temporary employees and produces approximately 8 – 8.5 million tons of coal per year. (3/15/2018)

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, MANAGEMENT, AND BUDGET**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

#### **Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget**

From May 29 - June 1, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, with the delegated authority of the Assistant Secretary, Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings.

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary – Technology, Information and Business Services (DAS TIBS)**

On May 30, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) is facilitating an all-day event in the Main Interior Building (MIB) Yates Auditorium called "Partners Outdoor 2018." It is being coordinated with DOI Intergovernmental and External Affairs and the American Recreation Coalition and brings together public and private sectors to showcase ideas for outdoor recreation. (05/23/2018)

#### **Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)**

From May 29 - June 1, Interior Inter-agency Borderland Coordinator, Brent Range will attend an inter-agency site visit to Rio Grande Valley, TX. During the site visit the group will travel to the FY18 funded new wall construction sites to discuss issues and solutions. (05/08/2018)

From May 29 - June 1, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Wildfire Committee Meeting to discuss high

priority items affecting wildland fire management. The meeting will be held in Napa, CA. (04/13/2018)

**Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

**Deputy Assistant Secretary – Technology, Information and Business Services (DAS TIBS)**

**NEW ITEMS**

*[NEW]* On June 12, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) is facilitating an Energy Summit in the MIB South Penthouse. Secretary Zinke is scheduled to participate in the event which is expected to draw about 60 people from within the Federal government and industry representatives. The event is led by Vincent DeVito, the Counselor for Energy Policy in Interior. (05/23/2018)

**UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

**ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

**Deputy Assistant Secretary – Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)**

**NEW ITEMS**

*[NEW]* During the week of June 11, the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee is expected to mark up the FY 2019 Interior Appropriations Bill. (05/23/2018)

*[NEW]* In June, the Deputy Secretary and related personnel are expected to meet with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the 2018 Strategic Review, in accordance with the OMB Director's memorandum M-18-15. The Strategic Review will assess and discuss performance goals and progress in implementing initiatives identified in the President's Management Agenda. (05/23/2018)

**UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

**ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

**Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)**

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**[UPDATE]** From June 4-7, an Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) representative (TBD) will attend the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) National Indian Timber Symposium to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. The meeting will be held in Ocean Shores, WA. (05/23/2018)

**[UPDATE]** On June 5, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director is tentatively scheduled testify before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee at an oversight hearing on wildland fire management. U.S. Forest Service Acting Chief Vicki Christiansen would also testify. (05/23/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 4, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert and U.S. Forest Acting Chief Vicki Christiansen will brief staff from the House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Federal Lands on the outlook for the upcoming fire season. (05/16/2018)

Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 6, 2018, the Royalty Policy Committee will conduct its next public meeting, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. On the 5th, the sectors will meet to review their presentations for the public meeting. On the 6th the full Committee will meet to present recommendations, hold public comment, debate, and vote on recommendations to the Secretary. The meeting notice was published in the Federal Register on May 17, 2018. (05/16/2018)

## **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget

## **NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

*[UPDATE]* From June 18-22, PDAS Scott Cameron will be in Denver and Wyoming to participate in an Interior Business Center (IBC) building reopening with the GSA Administrator at the Denver Federal Center, participate in an employee listening session and related activities associated with implementing the PMB workplace harassment action plan, and visiting with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Defense (DOD), and Wyoming state and private partners on cooperative rangeland management of invasive weeds. (05/23/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Technology, Information and Business Services (DAS TIBS)

## **NEW ITEMS**

*[NEW]* On July 3, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) will facilitate the 2018 Convocation Awards Ceremony in the MIB Yates Auditorium in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources. (05/23/2018)

*[NEW]* On July 4, the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services (OFAS) will coordinate and facilitate the Annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration events in the Secretary and Deputy Secretary's Offices as well as the South Penthouse & rooftop. (05/23/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)

## **NEW ITEMS**

*[NEW]* On June 19-21, 2018, the Fort Berthold Federal Partners Meeting will take place in Lakewood, Colorado. On June 19, 2018 the federal partners from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Energy Steering Committee (IESC), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), the Office of Special Trustee (OST), the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DEMD, the Department of

Energy (DOE), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will meet for a round table meeting to discuss open action items from the March 2018 Fort Berthold Federal Partners Meeting. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 20, 2018, the federal partners will meet with Chairman Mark Fox from the Three Affiliated Tribes (TAT), the TAT Tribal Business Council Segment representatives, TAT legal counsel, and the TAT Natural Resources/Energy Department to discuss open action items, identify opportunities, and discuss concerns. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** On June 21, 2018, a meeting will be held on the little and big Missouri River to discuss communitization agreements and cadastral surveys. This meeting will include the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Energy Steering Committee (IESC), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR). (05/23/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

## **Deputy Assistant Secretary – Human Capital and Diversity**

## **NEW ITEMS**

**[NEW]** The Office of Human Resources (OHR) recently presented a decision memorandum to the Deputy Secretary on the proposal to eliminate the Minimally Successful (Level 2) rating level from the Department's Performance Management System for GS employees. This proposal has been presented to the Bureau Human Capital Officers and Human Resources Directors, who concur with the change. OHR also received significant feedback supporting the change from Bureau leadership during the May 3 Management Improvement Team meeting. Absent feedback otherwise, OHR will begin updating policy to reflect changes to the Department's performance management system. (05/23/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

**[UPDATE]** On July 4, 2018, the Honor Awards Convocation will be held in the Main Interior Building Auditorium. 61 employees will be recognized for their outstanding contributions and achievements. Consistent with Departmental policy, only awardees recognized at Convocation include recipients of the Distinguished Service Awards, Valor Awards, Safety and Health Awards of Excellence, Aviation Safety Awards, and Citizen's Awards for Bravery. (05/23/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (DAS PRE)

**NEW ITEMS**

None to report.

**UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

**ONGOING ITEMS**

From June 11-14, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Jeff Rupert will attend the Wildland Fire Leadership Council Meeting to discuss high priority items affecting wildland fire management. The meeting will be held in Colorado Springs, CO. (04/23/2018)

From June 18-22, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will host approximately 50 members of the DOI emergency management community at the annual Emergency Management Council (EMC) Off-Site Workshop at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, WV. The workshop provides a forum for information sharing and collaboration on a number of overarching issues and will include a combination of keynote speakers, presentations, and working sessions. (05/16/2018).

**Awareness**

Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and Environmental Management (DAS PEM)

**NEW ITEMS**

*[NEW]* The Office of Policy Analysis (PPA) is reviewing the potential benefits of merging National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries with DOI. PPA has drafted a memo to OMB, potentially for the Deputy Secretary's signature, which includes a set of suggested next steps for merging the two entities. Further consultation is ongoing with the Solicitor's Office. (05/23/2018)

**UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

**ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

Deputy Assistant Secretary – Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition (DAS BFPA)

## NEW ITEMS

**[NEW]** Two Office of Acquisition and Property Management (PAM) staff members were recently deployed to Puerto Rico to assist with recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. Mary Heying, DOI Energy Program Manager, began an 8-week assignment to assist with infrastructure recovery projects; and Jason Jurgena, Staff Curator for the DOI Museum, began a 4-week assignment to assist with the recovery of cultural resources, including museums and museum collections. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** DOI recently debarred Timothy Strakosh, a former fish biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), based on his conviction for theft of government funds using his government credit card for personal purchases. DOI also debarred CMG Construction, Inc, based on CMG's convictions under two indictments on charges of conspiracy, wire fraud, bribery of a tribal official, and fraudulent claims against a federally funded project. The CMG debarment is the latest in 28 cases arising out of the fraud investigation and prosecutions at the Chippewa Cree Tribal Reservation in Box Elder, Montana. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** DOI recently proposed debarment of Robert T. Parker, based on his conviction for theft of United States property while employed by the National Park Service (NPS) as Chief of Interpretation at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site (MALU). Parker had oversight of the Donation Account for Eastern National (EN), a private organization supporting MALU interpretive, educational and scientific programs. EN donates a percentage of its profits to MALU. Parker embezzled EN donated funds. DOI also proposed debarment of Richard Lee Broome, Martin Gaspar Mazzara, and Zachary Brooke Roberts based on their convictions for their respective offenses as participants in connection with the scheme to defraud the Chippewa Cree Tribe, of Box Elder Montana. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently initiated a new audit “Records Management and Social Media” (Job Code 102678) in response to a request by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. The GAO will review: (1) how selected agencies have updated their records management policies and procedures to meet the requirements in the Presidential and Federal Records Act Amendments of 2014; (2) the extent the National Archives and Records Administration has assisted selected agencies in managing their records, including those created using social media websites and smartphone apps; and (3) selected agencies’ adherence to the Managing Government Records directive regarding the management of permanent electronic records and temporary email records. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** (Per GAO, distribution is highly restricted): The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently issued the draft report “Reverse Auctions: Additional Guidance Could Help Reduce Unnecessary Fees” (GAO-18-446) in response to requests from the Chairs of the House Armed Services Committee and the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee. The GAO reviewed select Federal agencies’ use of reverse auctions, a process where vendors bid against each other with lower prices to win government contracts. The GAO issued several recommendations to the five Federal agencies that were reviewed, including four to the Department, to further

evaluate the benefits and enhance the process to manage reverse auctions. The response is due June 11. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently issued the draft report “U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program Grants Awarded to the State of Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (State), from July 1, 2014, Through June 30, 2016” (2017-EXT-049). The OIG issued the State eight recommendations, questioning costs of \$148,000 (\$111,000 Federal share) as out-of-period costs. The OIG further determined the State had not properly classified its sub-awards and had not requested prior written approvals for large monetary purchases or multiple purchases of the same item; in addition to finding inadequate support for the State claimed in-kind contributions and equipment funding source. The response is due June 25. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently issued the draft report “U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program Grants Awarded to the New Jersey State Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife (State), From July 1, 2014, Through June 30, 2016” (2017-EXT-058). The OIG issued the State eight recommendations, finding the State did not: (1) report losing control of real property purchased with grant funds and license revenue; (2) submit Federal financial reports in a timely manner; (3) properly manage its personal equipment inventory; and (4) provide adequate support for the in-kind hours claimed as a portion of the grant match requirement. The response is due June 25. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently issued the draft report “Financial, Ethical, and Exclusive Use Concerns about the NPS’ Agreement with the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts” (2017-WR-037-A). The OIG evaluated whether the National Park Service (NPS) complied with applicable policies, laws, and regulations. The OIG identified concerns regarding the agreement between the NPS and the Wolf Trap Foundation (Foundation) for the Performing Arts, a nonprofit organization. In the report, the OIG issued NPS six recommendations to determine whether: (1) the Foundation is self-supporting; (2) the appropriateness of the eight tickets provided to the Secretary for each performance; (3) whether the NPS has authority to provide the Foundation exclusive use of Park sites, such as the Encore Circle Lounge to forgive \$1.6 million in Federal revenue; and (4) whether the Foundation should help offset the deferred maintenance needs of the Park. The OIG will address the use of philanthropic partner funds in its subsequent evaluation report. The response is due June 28. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently released the Verification Review – Recommendations for the Report “Controls Over Check Writing” (C-EV-MOA-0009-2011), (2018-ER-030). The OIG concurs that Recommendation 1 is resolved and implemented and considers Recommendation 2 to be resolved but not implemented. Outdated training requirements listed on the DOI Learn website (the Department’s internal training site) combined with no record of check writers and approving officials completing required training annually, which is the Department’s Integrated Charge Card Program policy, suggests challenges in implementing the new, annual training mandate remain. The response is due June 4. (05/23/2018)



**UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

**ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

#### Deputy Assistant Secretary – Human Capital and Diversity

#### **NEW ITEMS**

**[NEW]** The U.S. Office of Personnel Management recently issued implementing policy guidance for 5 U.S.C. 3322. This newly created section requires agencies to make a permanent notation in the personnel record file of an employee who is the subject of a personnel investigation and resigns from the agency prior to the resolution of the investigation, and the agency makes an adverse finding pursuant to the investigation. The Office of Human Resources (OHR), in consultation with the Office of the Solicitor, is preparing guidance to clarify the process for implementing this statute for the Department. (05/23/2018)

**[NEW]** The Office of Human Resources (OHR) recently met with the General Services Administration (GSA) Tiger team focused on the identifying a pilot within Interior to provide assistance with the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results. Based on the Department's strategic plan and draft Human Capital Operations Plan, the DOI HR Specialists occupational series was selected as the best fit for the pilot. The DOI OHR and GSA Tiger team will continue to meet to discuss the project plan for the pilot and associated events that will occur over the course of the next 90 days. (05/23/2018)

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **ONGOING ITEMS**

None to report.

#### **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR WATER AND SCIENCE**

##### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tim Petty will be in the DC area the week of May 27-June 2. On May 29-30, he will participate on behalf of DOI in the Department of State-hosted Columbia River Treaty negotiations. These are closed, invitation-only sessions. Tim will be in the office attending internal meetings May 31-June 1.

On May 27-June 2, USGS Director, Dr. James Reilly, will be in Reston, Va./Washington, D.C.

Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman will be in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday (5/29) and Wednesday (5/30) attending various meetings and events, including the May Monthly Colorado River Basin Call on May 30. On Thursday (5/31) and Friday (6/1), Commissioner Burman will travel to Anaheim, CA to attend and speak at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Orange County Water Summit, *Water: Behind the Magic*.

## **Immediate Announcements and Actions (within the next 14 days)**

### **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

Between May 28 and June 8, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's Environmental Resources Division will send out a press release awarding a \$1.1 million financial assistance agreement with the Navajo Nation. The agreement will allow the Navajo Nation to participate and assist with the San Juan Recovery Implementation Plan for various projects, including the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. (5/21/2018)

On or around May 29, the Bureau of Reclamation's Snake River Area Office will issue a final Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Pioneer Irrigation District & City of Caldwell, Idaho Title Transfer. The transfer will affect more than 80 miles of irrigation drains in the Pioneer Irrigation District and City of Caldwell. The final EA and FONSI release date and news release is anticipated to go out late May or early June. (5/21/2018)

On May 30, Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Regional Director David Murillo will speak at the Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Project Groundbreaking Ceremony in Knight's Landing, California. The Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Modification Project is located in the northern portion of the Yolo Bypass near Woodland, California. The project will improve fish passage at the Fremont Weir and within the Tule Canal. It will modify an existing fish ladder at the Fremont Weir and improve fish passage within the channel both upstream and downstream of the weir. (5/21/2018)

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

Between May 27 and June 8, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the data app prize competition. Reclamation, in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, is seeking the development of an application framework to support electronic data collection and capture across a diverse range of data collection situations using mobile devices. (3/26/2018)

Between May 27 and June 8, Reclamation is planning to announce the selected ideas submitted under the Long-Term Corrosion Protection of Existing Hydraulic Steel Structures prize competition. This prize competition sought ideas for long-term corrosion protection for large, hydraulic steel structures beyond the protection provided by available coatings and cathodic protection. (3/25/2018)

Between May 27 and June 8, Reclamation is planning to publish the remaining completed Rural Water Supply Program Appraisal Reports. Timing is based on when the notice is published in the Federal Register. A news release will be issued in conjunction with the notice. (1/9/2018)

Between May 27 and June 8, Reclamation will publish the Title XVI and WIIN funding opportunity announcement. Updated criteria for this funding opportunity were previously published for public comment on March 12. Title XVI provides financial assistance to local water agencies for the planning, design, and construction of water reclamation and reuse projects. (4/9/2018)

Between May 27 and June 8, Reclamation will release the selected entities to receive funding under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. The funding was announced in a funding opportunity announcement this past fall. It provides funding to develop a watershed management group, fund an existing watershed group, complete watershed restoration planning activities, and design watershed management projects. (4/9/2018)

By the end of May, Reclamation will issue a news release to announce the release of a draft environmental document for public review on a Long-Term Warren Act contract for the Sacramento Suburban Water District. Execution of the "wet-year only" contract would enable the delivery of up to 29,000 acre-feet per year of Middle-Fork Project water through Folsom. (5/7/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On May 30, co-leads U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Reclamation, and Bonneville Power Administration will host webinars – one for Tribal communities and one for the public to provide an update to share the progress in developing the range of alternatives and the next steps to analyze alternatives for environmental impacts associated with the Columbia River System Operations Environmental Impact Statement. The Tribal webinar will be from 9:30-11:30 PST and the public webinar will be from 3-4:30 p.m. PST. (5/14/2018)

In mid-May, Optomen Productions will film a one-hour special at Lake Berryessa, California, for *Mysteries at the Museum*, a Travel Channel show. The company coordinated with the area office and obtained a film permit. The small film crew will film the special on the Zodiac Killer (a serial killer) and the theories behind the murders with an expert. (5/14/2018)

## U.S. Geological Survey

## **NEW ITEMS**

On May 30-31, the USGS and BIA will be co-hosting the first Southwest Native American Workshop on Bats that is dedicated to tribal members and representatives of tribal nations of the Southwest. This two-day workshop will be held at the BIA, National Indian Program Training Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This workshop will include invited expertise from USGS, the North American Bat Monitoring Program, NPS, Bat Conservation International, and Oregon State University, who will address a variety of topics related to awareness and importance of bats on tribal lands, as well as threats (e.g., WNS), field techniques, data gaps, monitoring programs, and more. There will be a field trip to one of the local Pueblos to demonstrate field methods used to capture bats and decontamination protocols afterwards. (05/22/18)

## UPDATED ITEMS

On May 30, USGS will highlight results from airborne seismic studies that were conducted last August in Oklahoma with the Oklahoma Geological Survey. Oklahoma has been the site of thousands of earthquakes associated with wastewater injection activity but few earthquake sequences occur on mapped faults. This makes seismic hazard difficult to estimate. Using new airborne magnetic data to image rocks miles beneath the surface where the earthquakes are occurring, revealed numerous possible faults, in the form of magnetic lineaments, which had not previously been mapped. A number of lineaments are aligned with earthquake sequences, suggesting that they represent ancient faults that have been reactivated in the induced seismicity setting. A significant number of other lineaments aren't associated with seismicity, but are oriented favorably for rupture. The new data imply significant differences in fault structures between the older, deeper basement rocks and overlying, shallower and younger sedimentary rocks on which previous fault maps were mostly based. The findings will be published in *Geophysical Research Letters*. (5/10/2018)

On May 29, the USGS will announce a new paper that evaluates land and surface water changes in Alaska. USGS scientists and partners combined Landsat imagery and climate reanalysis data to characterize land and water surface changes and identify underlying drivers of change throughout Alaska from 1984 to 2015. They identify the percent of Alaska's lands that changed during the last three decades, the ecoregion most affected, and the agent most responsible for the change. The study discusses how increased air temperatures affect vegetation health and water availability. This research fills a critical gap in understanding historical and potential future trajectories of change not only in Alaska, but in other northern high latitude regions. The paper will be published in *Global Change Biology*. A USGS Top Story feature accompanied by social media is planned (4/20/2018)

On May 31, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee will hold a field hearing to review the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program. USGS has been invited to testify at the hearing, which is scheduled to take place at the Huntington Beach Council Chambers (California). USGS Earthquake Science Center Director, Steve Hickman, will serve as the DOI witness. Steve McCabe, NEHRP director at NIST, and possibly California Emergency Management and UC Irvine are also scheduled to testify. Anticipated Members include Reps. Rohrabacher (chairing) Steve Knight, and Mark Takano. (4/26/2018)

## ONGOING ITEMS

On May 29, the USGS will announce a new paper that finds some wetlands along the urbanized U.S. Gulf Coast may not have room to migrate inland as seas rise. In this first estuary-level assessment of potential wetland migration throughout the northern Gulf region, USGS researchers used elevation and NOAA tide data, NOAA watershed boundaries, the USFWS' National Wetland Inventory, and the USGS's National Land Cover Database, and applied three levels of sea level rise projections (0.5, 1 and 1.5 meters by 2100) to determine which estuaries have the most land available for wetland migration, and which ones have the most low-lying urban areas that could lead to coastal squeeze. The study allows land managers and planners to quickly identify which estuaries have a high potential for landward migration or coastal squeeze.

That information can help them set priorities and coordinate estuary-level planning to aid wetlands' adaptation to sea-level rise. The paper will be published in the *Journal of Applied Ecology* and a national news release is planned. (5/29/2018)

On May 30-31, the National Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC), Southeast CASC, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Caribbean Climate Hub, are convening a workshop in San Juan, Puerto Rico on drought in the U.S. Caribbean. The workshop will bring together regional experts in natural resources, agriculture, and water supply management to explore the state of the science on drought impacts in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as future drought risk and drought monitoring and information needs in the region. Partners include the USDA Caribbean Climate Hub and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Attendees will include CASC staff, managers from other federal agencies (USFWS, USDA, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), from Puerto Rico (Department of Natural & Environmental Resources, and Department of Agriculture), and from U.S. Virgin Islands (Department of Agriculture), as well as scientists from the University of Puerto Rico, University of the Virgin Islands, and the National Drought Mitigation Center. (5/14/2018)

In late May or early June, the USGS will release a Scientific Investigation Report co-authored with the Bureau of Reclamation that compares and contrasts the two agencies' water-use information programs in the Colorado River Basin. The report also describes the legal drivers for each program, clarifies confusing terminology, compares the methods used, and contrasts the information reported by each agency. This detailed comparison shows how the different missions, programmatic drivers, and user communities of USGS and Reclamation lead to different approaches to water-use data collection, analysis, and reporting. Despite the differences, the program comparison presented in this report identifies opportunities for closer coordination and sharing of information between the two bureaus, as well as program components where inter-bureau collaboration can improve water-use estimate methodologies. This report is a companion report that contains water-use estimates for 11 categories of use in drainage basins (HUC-8) within the Colorado River Basin (CRB). These reports will be released at the same time. (3/6/2018)

In late May or early June, the Water Resources Mission Area will release a new report and data release that contains water-use estimates for 11 categories of use in drainage basins (HUC-8) within the Colorado River Basin (CRB). This report is a companion report to *Comparison of USGS and Bureau of Reclamation Water-Use Reporting in the Colorado River Basin*. These reports will be released at the same time. Three key takeaways from the report: 1) Total water use, excluding interbasin transfers of water out of the CRB, averaged about 17 million acre-feet from 1985 to 2010, peaking in 2000 at 17.76 million acre-feet, and was at the lowest level of 16.43 million acre-feet in 1990. 2) Irrigation of crops was the predominant offstream use of water, averaging 85 percent of total use over the 25-year timespan; much more surface water was used than groundwater. 3) Population in the CRB increased from about 4.6 million people to over 9.4 million people between 1985 and 2010, and most of the people were in the lower CRB. By far, most of the public-supply withdrawals occurred in the lower CRB, and surface-water was the predominant source of water. (5/10/2018)

On June 1, the House Natural Resources Committee is planning to hold a field hearing in Grand Junction, Colorado at Colorado Mesa University (2:00 p.m.). This hearing will focus on opportunities to export natural gas from the Piceance Basin and the Jordan Cove LNG Terminal project. The hearing will also discuss oil shale opportunities in the U.S. and the need for further research on unconventional resources. USGS Energy Resources Program Coordinator Walter Guidroz will testify on recoverable resources in the Piceance Basin in Western Colorado, with other witnesses likely from the Western Slope Oil and Gas Association, the Colorado School of Mines, and the National Oil Shale Association. Anticipated Members in attendance will include Chairman Bishop, Rep. Tipton (who will chair the hearing) and Rep. Lamborn. (5/3/2018)

### **15-60 Day Look-Ahead**

ASWS Travel: AS/WS Tim Petty is likely to travel to the Columbia River Basin during the week of June 25-29, to participate in Columbia River Treaty discussions and potential site visits.

### **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

Between June 1-4, Reclamation will announce a start date and water allocation numbers for the Klamath Project (Oregon). News releases and other communication will occur. Intense media interest is expected. (5/21/18)

On June 3, Reclamation's Nathan Holste is scheduled to present "Design and Analysis of Channel Restoration Features in Confined Urban Rivers" at the 2018 World Environmental & Water Resources Congress hosted by the American Society of Civil Engineers in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The theme is "Protecting and Securing Water and the Environment for Future Generations." (5/21/2018)

Between June 4 and 12, Reclamation's International Affairs Program will host its annual Safety Evaluation of Existing Dams International Technical Seminar and Study Tour. There will be 29 people from 11 countries attending this year. Technical seminars will take place in Denver, Colorado including a sample dam safety evaluation at Pueblo Dam in Colorado. On June 11-12, participants will tour Shasta, Keswick, Lewiston and Trinity Dams, part of the Central Valley Project in Northern California. This technical seminar and study tour is fully reimbursable to Reclamation by the participants. (5/21/2018)

On July 17, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District and Reclamation will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Ruedi Reservoir (Colorado). It will be preceded by a tour of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project West Slope facilities July 16. (5/21/2018)

#### **UPDATED ITEMS**

Later this summer, Reclamation will release the selected projects under the Drought Resiliency Project funding opportunity announcement. Through drought resiliency projects Reclamation

will provide funding for projects that will help communities prepare for and respond to drought. (4/9/2018)

## ONGOING ITEMS

In early June, The Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region, Yuma Area Office (YAO) intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to request proposals to fund projects for activities in support of its Endangered Species and Environmental Restoration programs in Federal FY 2018 (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018). The YAO periodically makes funding available for conducting activities for Threatened and Endangered species and their habitats under Section 7(a)1 of the Endangered Species Act under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Program (FWCAP). Reclamation has made \$110,000.00 of funding available for award for this FWCAP Financial Assistance FOA. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that FY 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Reclamation will limit total funding to generally not more than \$50,000 in Federal funding to each applicant. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Eligible applicants are state and local governments, non-profit organizations and institutions, public and private institutions and organizations, federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments, individuals, small businesses, for-profit organizations, and Native American organizations. (4/9/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement on the New Mexico Unit Project. The proposed project is part of the Central Arizona Project, authorized by the Colorado River Basin Project Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90-537, 43 U.S.C. Ch. 32, as amended by the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA, Pub. L. 108-451). Pursuant to the AWSA, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to contract with water users in New Mexico for water from the Gila River, its tributaries and underground water sources. Use of Gila River water under the AWSA is conditioned on satisfying various laws and agreements related to the use and exchange of Gila River water in New Mexico and Arizona. The NM Unit will divert Gila River water in New Mexico for this purpose. The AWSA provided funding to construct the NM Unit or, to develop other alternatives in southwestern New Mexico to meet demand. Reclamation and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission are joint lead agencies for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other related environmental regulations regarding the proposed Project. Issuance of the NOI will initiate the formal public scoping process associated with NEPA compliance. The process for publishing the Federal Register Notice of Intent will follow the NEPA Document Clearance Process outlined in the Deputy Secretary's April 27, 2018, memorandum. (3/27/2018)

In June 2018, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the *Federal Register (FR)*, to be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. The FR notice requests public comments on the Department's proposed decision to re-allocate Central Arizona Project non-Indian agricultural priority (CAP NIA) water consistent with a recommendation made to the Secretary by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) in January 2014. This process is in accordance with Section 104 of the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act (Public Law 108-451), which directed the Secretary to allocate to the ADWR up to 96,295 acre-feet of CAP NIA



priority water; this water is to be held by ADWR under contract in trust for further allocation, until a reallocation recommendation is submitted by ADWR to the Secretary. In 2012, ADWR began the reallocation recommendation process, and on January 16, 2014, ADWR submitted its recommendation to the Secretary. As explained in the proposed FR notice, the Secretary proposes to make 46,629 acre-feet of the NIA Priority CAP water available under long-term contracts in the amounts and to the municipal and industrial entities identified in ADWR's recommendation. Reallocation of CAP NIA priority water would address the imbalance of water supply and demand in central Arizona by providing renewable water supplies to those entities with a projected demand/supply imbalance based on ADWR's evaluation criteria. (4/23/2018)

In June, Reclamation is proposing to publish a notice in the Federal Register to begin charging fees at Lake Berryessa in Napa County, California. The fees will be used to upgrade facilities and pay for costs associated with recreation. Reclamation will ensure visitors are aware of the proposed plan by holding public scoping meetings, issuing press releases, posting it on the Lake Berryessa website at [www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa/index.html), and posting announcements at day-use areas. During public scoping meetings and the public comment period, Reclamation will seek input from the public regarding the possible use of funds collected. Public scoping meetings and public outreach will ensure the public is aware of all proposed fees and passes available to them. (2/26/2018)

In late June, Reclamation, Klamath Irrigation District, R&G Excavating, Klamath County, and the Klamath Basin irrigation community (Oregon) will hold an event to celebrate the completion of the new C Siphon which will convey irrigation water across the Lost River slough and Wildcat Canyon. The event will celebrate the success of the two-year construction project and a decades-long effort from procuring funding to construction. Media interest is expected. (4/23/2018)

On or about June 15, Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office plans to publish a Notice in the *Federal Register* entitled: Notice of Intent to Accept Proposals, Select Lessee, and Contract for Hydroelectric Power Development at Silver Jack Dam, Bostwick Park Project, Colorado. This Notice will present background information, proposal content guidelines, and information concerning selection of a non-Federal entity to develop hydroelectric power at Silver Jack Dam, and power purchasing and/or marketing considerations. Silver Jack Dam is a Federal Reclamation project located in Colorado. Reclamation is seeking proposals to lease the right to develop hydroelectric power at Silver Jack Dam outside of Montrose, Colorado, under a Lease of Power Privilege. The potential lessee must submit proposals on or before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 19, 2018, consistent with the guidelines included in the *Federal Register Notice*. (5/7/2018)

#### U.S. Geological Survey

#### **NEW ITEMS**

2017 Senate appropriations report language called for a document on "the extent the Survey has surveyed the U.S. domestic mineral base" and "what commodities the Survey determines to be strategic or critical minerals". The timeline for delivery of the report was subsequently adjusted

so that USGS could align the document with the Secretary's plan for subsurface mapping (delivered on April 19 under Secretarial Order 3359) and cite the Department's final list of critical minerals (noticed on May 18). In early June, USGS will provide a draft response for review and approval. (05/22/2018)

During the week of May 28, USGS will publish a Federal Register notice as preparation for OMB review of an Information Collection. *Nonferrous Metals Surveys*, is a collection of 27 forms sent to businesses that mine or prepare metals for industrial purposes. Nonferrous metals include gold, silver, tungsten, copper and many other not iron based metals. The survey results are published for planning purposes and to assist industry with supplies. (5/22/2018)

In June/July, Penn State University and the USGS will announce a new paper that assesses the climate sensitivity of amphibian communities in the U.S. and Canada. For this study an international team of scientists quantified climate sensitivity and assessed how climate sensitivity varies regionally for 81 species of amphibians across the United States and Canada. Partners for this study include Pennsylvania State University, University of Colorado, University of Washington, Institute of Evolutionary Biology and Environmental Studies (Switzerland), McGill University (Canada), University of Connecticut, Colorado State University, Virginia Tech, Parks Canada, University of Kentucky, National Parks Service, U.S. Forest Service, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains and Pepperdine University. The paper will be published in *Nature Communications* and a joint news release is planned. (5/15/2018)

## UPDATED ITEMS

The week of June 4, USGS will participate in the Association of American State Geologists' annual meeting in Rehoboth, Del., including a breakout session with an emphasis on critical minerals. USGS Director Jim Reilly and ASWS Tim Petty are also scheduled to provide remarks and participate in the meeting. (5/8/2018)

In the next few weeks, the USGS will be publishing a required Congressional report that summarizes USGS progress towards a national assessment of water availability and use. This National Water Census report, authorized by the SECURE Water Act (P.L. 111-11, Section 9508 (d)) (42 USC 10368), is the second in a series of reports to Congress that explains how the Water Census has progressed towards goals from 2013 to 2017. This is a congressionally mandated report that describes critical work the USGS has completed to understand, assess, and deliver information about water availability, as well as the collaboration and coordination with other agencies and organizations that are essential to the success of the National Water Census. (4/30/2018)

In June, the USGS will announce a new Scientific Investigation Report that provides inundation maps and flood details following Hurricane Harvey for areas of eastern and coastal Texas. Hurricane Harvey was the most significant rainfall event in US history, according to an upcoming USGS report. High water mark data, along with flood flow information from USGS streamgages, were used to create 19 inundation maps documenting the areal extent and depth of the flooding. In the immediate aftermath of Harvey, the USGS and FEMA initiated a cooperative study to evaluate the magnitude of flooding, determine the probability of occurrence and map the

extent of the flood in Texas. USGS field crews collected 2,123 high-water marks in across southeast Texas. A statewide news release is planned for Texas and the report will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. (4/26/2018)

At the end of June, the USGS will highlight a new USGS Circular entitled “A snapshot of women of the U.S. Geological Survey in STEM and related careers.” Women’s participation rate in the sciences is still lower than men’s and relatively few women reach top scientific leadership roles. The USGS needs specialists from a growing variety of science and related fields to remain a science leader. Given that girls and women are underrepresented, it is logical to look to them to fulfill society’s growing need and demand for science. With the online release of this circular, USGS will embark on a long-term campaign to encourage and inspire students, particularly girls and young women from middle school through early career, to consider Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) careers, and to reach experienced female professionals for science and leadership positions in USGS. This will include an internal USGS and DOI communications component to honor, inspire, and celebrate women within the USGS. The circular will be posted online in the USGS Publications Warehouse. Printed copies will be available in June. A social media campaign in planned. (4/26/2018)

In June, the USGS will announce a forthcoming energy resource assessment of the Eagle Ford Shale in Texas. The Eagle Ford Shale extends from the Mexico-U.S. border in southern Texas north through San Antonio towards Waco. The Eagle Ford has been an active oil and gas producing region for the past decade. USGS previously assessed the Eagle Ford in 2011. Using a geology-based assessment methodology, the USGS will assess estimates of undiscovered, technically recoverable resources of oil and natural gas. A news release is planned, and USGS expects to offer Congressional briefings. (5/15/2018)

In June/July, USGS will highlight research that examined differential changes in the onset of spring across U.S. National Wildlife Refuges and North American migratory bird flyways. The study used indices of spring onset, the First Leaf Index and the First Bloom Index, as proxies of habitat change for the period 1901 to 2012 at three spatial scales: the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System; the four major bird migratory flyways in North America; and the seasonal ranges (i.e., breeding and non-breeding grounds) of two migratory bird species, Bluewinged Warbler and Whooping Crane. The results provide insight into how differential shifts in the phenology of disparate but linked habitats could inform local- to landscape-scale management strategies for the conservation of migratory bird populations. A Top Story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

On June 15, the USGS will announce a new report that evaluates the condition of resources in Olympic National Park. The 400-page Natural Resource Condition Assessment, or NRCA, addresses the current status and trends of 12 resources that Olympic National Park managers identified as species or communities of concern. The report was produced in cooperation with the National Park Service and a local news release is planned. (4/17/2018)

In early June, USGS and NOAA will release the 2018 forecast for the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico. The hypoxic zone is an area of low to no oxygen that can kill fish and other marine life. The Gulf's hypoxic (low oxygen) and anoxic (oxygen-free) zones are caused by excess nutrient pollution, primarily from human activities such as agriculture and wastewater. The excess nutrients stimulate an overgrowth of algae, which then sinks and decomposes in the water. The resulting low oxygen levels are insufficient to support most marine life and habitats in near-bottom waters, threatening the Gulf's fisheries. A news release is planned. (5/14/2018)

In June, the USGS will release a new Circular entitled "Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2015." This report documents the national compilation of water use data issued by the USGS once every 5 years for the entire U.S. The report will present state-level water use data for the year 2015 and discuss long-term trends in water use. An accompanying data release of county-level data will be made available concurrently with the Circular. Also, a data visualization for the Circular and county-level data is being created. All three products will be released concurrently, and a news release is planned. (3/14/2018)

In June, the USGS will be highlighting remote sensing efforts underway. The first part will focus on a new research effort to survey water resources in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain from the air. Beginning in late February, the USGS began the first in a series of flights in Greenwood, Mississippi, to acquire large-scale airborne geophysical data in support of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain (MAP) Regional Water Availability Study, part of a groundwater availability study in the region. The USGS is working in partnership with multiple state agencies. The second is a UAS project in Colorado where the USGS will be testing a variety of noncontact sensors mounted on small, unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) to measure river metrics including velocity, top width, area, and discharge and compare these data to ground-based conventional streamgaging methods. A top story is being planned. (4/17/2018)

In June and over the summer, the USGS will be releasing several publications and data products enhancing understanding of "Groundwater Availability of the Williston Basin, United States and Canada". A multi-year regional assessment of groundwater availability in the Williston Basin was started in 2011 under the USGS's Water Availability and Use Science Program, as part of its ongoing regional assessments of groundwater availability of the principal aquifers of the Nation. The goals of this national assessment are to document effects of human activities on water levels and groundwater storage, to explore effects of climate variability on the regional water budget, and to provide consistent and integrated information that is useful to those who use and manage the groundwater resource. The first product will be a *SIR Construction and Calibration of a Groundwater-Flow Model to Assess Groundwater Availability in the Uppermost Principal Aquifer Systems of the Williston Basin, United States and Canada*. In the next several months, the USGS will also release the following: 1) Professional Paper *Groundwater Availability of the Williston Basin, United States and Canada*; 2) Fact Sheet *Williston Basin Groundwater Availability, United States and Canada*; and 3) Data release *Water Use for Hydraulic Fracturing Treatments in and near the Williston Basin, United States, 2000-2015*. (5/10/2018)

In June, the USGS will announce an upcoming article that finds the elevation at which clouds begin to form is the dominant factor in the extinction risk for the federally endangered Shenandoah salamander. The cloud base height is a function of temperature and relative

humidity. Regional forecasts suggest increased warming in these high-elevation habitats, so increases in cloud base heights are expected to continue into the future. This could increase the extinction risk for the Shenandoah salamander. The paper will be published in *Ecology and Evolution* and a local news release is planned. (5/14/2018)

In June or July USGS scientists will coordinate with the Los Angeles Zoo and others to release captive-bred, endangered mountain yellow-legged frogs in southern California. This species faces multiple threats, including habitat loss, drought, and chytrid fungus. The Los Angeles Zoo and the city of Los Angeles are both planning press surrounding the frogs' release (including a potential press release, and possible attendance by the mayor of Los Angeles). The *Los Angeles Times* is planning to publish an article about the collaborative project. (05/16/18)

### **Awareness**

### **CUPCA**

#### **NEW ITEM**

The CUPCA Office and the Central Utah Water Conservancy District are considering conveyance and storage of non-project water in the Starvation Collection System, Central Utah Project. Up to 14,000 acre-feet of water could be stored on a space-available basis in the system. Scoping will be conducted as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance. Upon completion of NEPA, contracts under the authority of the Warren Act could be executed with local water organizations for conveyance and storage. This week the District issued a pre-scoping newsletter requesting input on the topic by June 29, 2018.

### **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

#### **NEW ITEMS**

On May 21, Reclamation's Upper Colorado Region's Power Office announced Razorback sucker larvae have been confirmed in the middle Green River. To meet Larval Trigger Study Plan (LTSP) flow targets, Flaming Gorge releases will be increased to full power plant capacity (4,600 cfs). Releases shall remain at power plant capacity until further notice. Though not currently planned, bypass releases from Flaming Gorge Dam, Dutch John, Utah, may need to be utilized at a later date to meet LTSP flow targets. Under such circumstances a one-day notice will be given to the public. (05/21/2018)

Central North Dakota Water Supply Revised Environmental Assessment Draft comment period ended May 17. Comments were received from the City of Carrington, Coalition to Protect the Missouri River, Manitoba, Missouri DNR, McLean-Sheridan Rural Water District, North Dakota Department of Health, and North Dakota State Water Commission. (5/21/2018)

Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., is again preparing to propose legislation that would transfer title to parts of the Middle Rio Grande Project to the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD). The legislation would rely heavily on a Memorandum of Understanding between

Reclamation and MRGCD which has been under development for several months. MRGCD has completed its repayment to Reclamation under the 1951 repayment contract, but Reclamation has not yet received congressional authorization to transfer title to the district. Reclamation would generally support such a transfer as long as certain conditions are met, including full consultation and agreement by the six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos. Preliminary discussions have considered proposing this title transfer bill along with legislation that is being drafted by Rep. Steve Pearce, R-N.M., that would transfer the historic dam site area at Elephant Butte, New Mexico to the City of Elephant Butte. (05/21/2018)

## **UPDATED ITEMS**

The Notice of Availability for the Heart Butte (North Dakota) Conduit Repair Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact have been posted. (4/29/2018)

## **ONGOING ITEMS**

Reclamation Great Plains Region continues to support the Department of Justice in settlement talks with Manitoba regarding the Northwest Area Water Supply (North Dakota). On May 7, 2018, the United States Court of Appeals issued an order extending the 90-day stay in this case by another 30 days. This allows continued progress in the settlement discussions. Briefs in this case are now scheduled to begin in June and conclude in September 2018. (5/15/2018)

On May 7, Reclamation's Great Plains Regional Office received a request for a temporary water service contract with an applicant from Montana who wishes to grow industrial hemp under the exemption provided by Section 7606 of the 2014 Farm Bill Act (Pub. L. 113-79, Title VII, § 7606, 7 U.S.C. 5940 – signed in 2014.) This grower previously requested, and was not provided, a water service contract in 2017. Reclamation and the Solicitor's Office are evaluating the request, and will work to provide an answer prior to the grower's requested June 1, 2018 deadline. (5/14/2018)

Following coordination with his counterpart Assistant Secretaries, AS/WS Tim Petty provided a Decision Memorandum for the Secretary's consideration setting forth the Department's position on the priority of the key drivers for the upcoming Columbia River Treaty negotiations. The Department will actively participate in Columbia River Treaty negotiations/activities through the engagement of Assistant Secretary Petty, and staffed by Reclamation, with the treaty's two technical entities, Bonneville Power Administration and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Department supports the two key drivers being flood control and hydropower generation. (4/2/2018)

The April 2018 24-Month Study establishes that Lake Powell operations will shift to "balancing releases" for the remainder of water year 2018. Under balancing, the contents of Lake Powell and Lake Mead will be balanced by the end of the water year, but not more than 9.0 million acre-feet and not less than 8.23 maf shall be released from Lake Powell. Based on the most probable inflow forecast, this April 24-Month Study projects a balancing release of 9.0 maf in water year 2018; the actual release in water year 2018, however, will depend on hydrology in the remainder of water year and will range from 8.23 to 9.0 maf. The projected release from Lake Powell in

water year 2018 will be updated each month throughout the remainder of the water year. Based on the current inflow forecast and projected releases, the April 24-Month Study projects Lake Powell elevation will end water year 2018 near 3,598 feet, with approximately 11.6 maf in storage (48 percent of capacity). Currently, Lake Powell is 53 percent full, with a live storage content of 12.8 maf. (4/16/2018)

In conjunction with the Administration's legislation transmitted to Congress to facilitate the transfer of title of Bureau of Reclamation's projects and facilities to non-Federal entities, the Department and Reclamation are working with the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) on development of a categorical exclusion (CE) under the National Environmental Policy Act for select types of title transfers. The CE would be established for those situations where the proposed transfer of title from Reclamation to a willing entity is non-controversial, non-complicated and would not result in a change in the operations or management of the facilities. Establishment of a categorical exclusion could decrease the time required for Reclamation to complete title transfers. Pursuant to CEQ Regulations, Reclamation and CEQ are currently working together on a notice for the Federal Register proposing that a CE be established for this purpose. The expected target for publication of this notice in the Federal Register is mid-July. (3/20/2018)

#### U.S. Geological Survey

#### **NEW ITEMS**

The USGS Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (HVO) reports that moderate-level eruption of lava continues from multiple points along the northeast end of the active fissure system in the lower Puna area. On the morning of May 22, the margin of a lava flow sourced from fissures 5 and 13 was 180 meters from well pad KS14 at the Puna Geothermal Ventures (PGV) facility. By noon the flow had stopped. Fissures 6 through 22 are erupting lava fountains. The lava fountain from fissure 22 continues to feed a channelized flow that reaches the coast just north of MacKenzie State Park. Fissure 6 is feeding a flow to the south that is roughly paralleling the flow from fissure 22, but has not yet reached the coast. As lava flows enter the ocean, a different noxious hazard referred to as a laze plume (from lava and haze) is generated from the flash vaporization of seawater producing a plume of hydrochloric acid gas, steam and volcanic glass particles. Exposure to a laze plume leads to stinging on the skin, irritation of the eyes, nose and throat and difficulty breathing. Trade winds are currently blowing the laze plumes to the southwest. Fountaining of lava at fissures 5 and 23 has fed flows in the eastern part of Leilani Estates. Sulfur dioxide gas emissions have tripled as a result of voluminous eruptions from fissure 20, and concentrations are likely elevated to higher levels throughout the area downwind of the fissure vents. At Kīlauea's summit multiple small eruptions of ash occurred on May 22nd, none ejecting ash higher than 10,000 ft. above sea level. As of late afternoon of May 22, HVO web cameras recorded a robust plume of gas and steam billowing out of the Overlook Crater vent and drifting generally southwest. At present, HVO is serving as an unattended communications hub that has power and continues to provide access to critical monitoring data streams. HVO staff are working from a COOP site at the University of Hawaii Hilo campus with a secure connection to DOI.net and are continuing to monitor all activity utilizing data from seismometers, tiltmeters, GPS and other instruments, remote sensing from satellites and field observations (5/23/18).

The Virginia-West-Virginia (VA-WV) Water Science Center has been responding to a persistent rainfall event since the morning of May 15, 2018. The areas primarily impacted stretch from Martinsville, VA across the VA/NC border to South Boston, VA and north into the Shenandoah Valley near Harrisonburg, VA and from Richmond, VA northeast across the Northern Neck and Chesapeake Bay. This brings the total for this multi-day event to between 8-15 inches north of Richmond, VA and into the eastern panhandle of West Virginia. There are currently 21 sites above the National Weather Service (NWS) flood stage, 15 in VA and another 6 in WV. Most streams are forecast to crest later today and into the afternoon on Sunday. No peaks of record are forecast across the region and return periods are between 5-20 years (0.2 to 0.06 exceedance probability) for the affected basins. (5/18/18)

Heavy rainfall in Frederick County, Maryland over several days during the week of May 14, combined with additional heavy rain falling in southern Maryland, Washington, D.C. and the central Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delaware is providing opportunities for rating confirmation and water-quality sampling at numerous stream locations. On May 18th, rainfall is forecast to move from south to north over the Chesapeake Bay and both shores, possibly reaching the Baltimore metropolitan area by this afternoon. Measuring and sampling opportunities will continue to develop along the track of the precipitation. Repairs were made to two gages on Little Catoctin Creek in Frederick County. That effort, along with measurements and sample collection will be performed by 13 field crews including 27 staff members. (5/18/18)

During the ongoing eruption at Kīlauea Volcano, Interior Office of Aviation Services (OAS) and the USGS UAS Project Office deployed equipment and trained personnel support remote sensing data acquisition for continued monitoring on Hawaii. Operations are expected to continue for next few weeks. Proper authorizations from the Federal Aviation Administration, DOI agencies, and the local emergency operations organizations have been established for extended period UAS operations. Urgent assistance was provided to local county and fire emergency managers to monitor lava movement toward the Puna Geothermal Venture Hawaiian Electric Plant and the volcano crater for scientific measurements and modeling. Monitoring volcanic activity using thermal video imagery and gas sensors and ground mapping of the volcanic fissures are the highest geospatial data priorities and are likely to be so for the coming weeks. All collected data, approved by government and emergency managers for release, will be organized, archived and distributed through the Hazards Data Distribution System available online ([hddsexplorer.usgs.gov](http://hddsexplorer.usgs.gov).) (05/23/2018)

On May 30, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will hold a workshop on “Environmental Legacies and Produced Water Related to Oil and Gas Production” in Aurora, Colorado. USGS scientist Mark Engle will give a TED-style keynote address titled “Produced Water”. (05/22/2018)

Through June 8, USGS scientists are engaged in cooperative studies involving the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) to investigate various capture methods for invasive Asian Carp using novel gear types in backwaters of the Illinois River. Research is focused on evaluating novel gear types to 1) compare the passive capture efficacy of three different trap net types in the Illinois River watershed, 2) compare the capture efficacy of the three different trap nets with manipulating behavior such as driving/herding fish with a sound stimulus, electroshock or with



the use of chemical attractants, and 3) compare and contrast other important aspects such as cost effectiveness and maintenance, size distribution of catch, and non-target catch rates for each capture technique. (05/22/18)

On June 11-13, USGS will present new science at the National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center Symposium in Annapolis, MD. USGS is part of a team of scientists examining the driving forces behind forest mortality during California's historic drought. The researchers used two datasets from a lower mixed conifer forest in the Sierra Nevada to investigate the types of trees that died during the drought, the direct causes of their deaths, and the influence that prior stress had on risk of tree mortality. Results indicate that bark beetles were the primary force driving tree mortality during the drought, and that they did select specific tree species. Prior stress influenced risk of mortality for some subsets of trees but not others. These findings can inform forest management in a future with more severe and frequent droughts. (05/22/18)

USGS has initiated a study to measure phosphorus concentrations in water, sediment, and Cladophora algae at multiple water depths throughout the Great Lakes. This project will help researchers determine how much phosphorus in the Great Lakes leads to overgrowth of this filamentous algae and the subsequent impact it has on the native ecosystem. Field work and training commenced this month at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. USGS scuba divers and technicians will sample monthly in Lakes Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario through October. The project is funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and partners in the effort include the National Park Service, U.S. EPA, NOAA, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. (05/22/18)

The USGS will initiate a new study to examine how beaver expansion affects Oregon Spotted Frogs in the Mink Lake Basin in the Three Sisters Wilderness in Oregon. The Oregon spotted frog (OSF) has been extirpated from much of western Oregon and Washington and is now restricted to high elevations in limited areas. The OSF is listed as threatened due to factors such as introduced fish and bullfrogs, as well as habitat loss from shrub encroachment on wetlands and beaver removal. USGS scientists will begin a study to examine how beaver expansion affects OSFs in the Mink Lake Basin in the Three Sisters Wilderness in Oregon. They will also look for impacts from recreation. The U.S. Forest Service funded this study and will help with data collection. (05/22/18)

## UPDATED ITEMS

Flooding continues in the Upper Columbia Basin in northeast Washington due to snowmelt from a above normal snowpack. The Kettle River near Ferry, WA gage in operation since 1928 set a peak of record on May 10 at 23,800 cfs. Downstream on the Kettle River near Laurier, WA the gage in operation since 1929 set a new peak of record at 48,500 cfs. Crews made the highest discharge measurements ever at these two sites last week. The Similkameen River near Nighthawk, WA and the Okanogan River near Tonasket, WA both set the third highest peaks in their 90-year records and both are forecasted to peak again at a higher level later this week. The Pend Oreille River gage at the Washington-Idaho State border continues to rise and may set the highest peak since 1894 by the weekend. Crews took the weekend off, but will be out all week taking care of the operation of the gages and making discharge measurements. Other rivers on

the east side of the Washington Cascade Mountains that are expected to exceed their flood stage this week include the Methow, Stehekin, Spokane and Entiat Rivers. Equipment problems have been limited to an A-frame that went under water (will need post-flood inspection), a large tree fell on a cableway, and a real-time water temperature site was submerged by flood waters. (5/10/2018)

Flooding in the Clark Fork basin in Western Montana continues, and the last update is still largely accurate. As of today, 4 gages are measuring minor flooding, 1 with major flooding (Missoula) and 2 other gages that may exceed flood stage before they peak this weekend. It's unclear given precip. forecasts and current snowpack whether these flows will be the peak for the year or whether another peak may be coming. Melting of low- to mid-elevation mountain snowpack in combination with rainfall in some areas has resulted in streamflows exceeding National Weather Service minor to major flood stages at 7 USGS streamgages in the basin. The most significant flooding is occurring in and near Missoula, Montana. Streamflows are expected to peak later this week and into next week. Forecasted peaks could be the largest since 1953. Daily streamflow records at several USGS streamgages are longer than 80 years. Two teams of two hydrographers and one individual are deployed making discharge measurements in the Clark Fork River and Flathead River basins. A stage sensor was relocated at one streamgage to address data-quality concerns. (5/10/2018)

Executive Order 13817/Secretarial Order 3359 milestones: The USGS supported the Department in preparing a “Final List of Critical Minerals (2018)”, noticed in the Federal Register on May 18, 2018. Other current activities: On April 19, 2018, the USGS delivered to the Secretary a draft plan to better assess the Nation’s subsurface mineral potential through new collection of geophysical, geologic, and topographic data. Beginning in May, the USGS is working with other Federal agencies and external partners on revisions as required to inform the government-wide strategy to be published by the Department of Commerce in August 2018. Interagency drafting teams are working on first drafts of the strategy’s pieces as required by the Executive Order. Two of these strategy pieces require USGS technical input to interagency drafting teams on: (1) geologic composition of above-ground sources of critical minerals available for recycling, reprocessing, and substituting alternative materials; (2) existing foreign trade dependencies for critical minerals. (2/9/2018)

Beginning August 6, the USGS will conduct the Mid-Atlantic Resource Imaging Experiment (MATRIX) seismic project on Atlantic margin in partnership with BOEM and the U.S. Department of Energy. The goal of the project is to image distribution of gas hydrate and shallow gas on Atlantic margin between Hudson Canyon and Cape Hatteras across areas considered highly prospective for gas hydrates. Seismic data will be collected over a period of 2.5 to 3 weeks. An Incidental Harassment Authorization Application was submitted to NMFS in March, initial comments have been received, and the Federal Register Notice is anticipated by the end of May. The Draft Environmental Assessment and request for Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act was also submitted to NMFS in March. The draft EA is posted on the USGS Coastal/Marine Hazards & Resources Program’s environmental compliance website and has closed for comment. (4/6/2018)

## ONGOING ITEMS

On June 2, the USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center (NOROCK) in Bozeman, Mont. will host an Open House from 10am - 3pm. The local community is invited to to learn more about the exciting science NOROCK does on bears, elk, glaciers, avalanches, tree rings, bats, American pikas, native fish, invasive species, wildlife disease, sagebrush habitats, Montana's water resources, Yellowstone geology and much more, including cool technology to study wildlife such as radars and drones. This family-friendly event is free to the public and includes several engaging and interactive exhibits and demonstrations. (5/8/2018)

During the week of June 4, USGS Regional Directors from the Pacific, Northwest and Southwest Regions will meet in Denver, Colo. with Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Interior, Alan Mikkelsen, to discuss current USGS science in the west. Topics will likely include natural hazards, water, ecosystems, and energy and minerals.

In late June, a delegation of 180 officials from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are invited to meet at the University of Oklahoma, the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) host university, during the 2018 Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Council Ministerial. The South Central CASC is planning to highlight their science work during the officials' visit and will be part of the University of Oklahoma's discussions for future plans to collaborate with these officials and stakeholders. The CEC Council Chairmanship and Ministerial rotates between the US, Mexico, and Canada each year, and Administrator Scott Pruitt (current chair) selected Oklahoma City as the location for the 2018 meeting. The theme for this year's Council Ministerial is "Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth". (4/24/2018)

The USGS continues progress toward implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) for the energy geochemistry laboratories. External audits are complete and USGS is preparing a formal report to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) that certifies that a functional QMS is fully implemented. The target date to complete the package internally is May 18, after which results will be reviewed with USGS management and submitted to DOI for further review. Any changes will be reviewed again, with final submission to the OIG scheduled for late June. (5/2/2018)

The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NAS) has nearly completed a strategic review of the USGS Energy Resources Program. The study is to evaluate the long term strategic priorities of the program and suggest alternatives or changes for the program to consider. A committee was assembled by the NAS and has now met three times, twice with program participation and once in closed session. A rough draft of the report is due in early July, with a final report due by August. (5/2/2018)

Secretarial Order 3352 milestones: The reprocessing of vintage 2-D seismic data acquired in the mid-1980s over the Section 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is progressing, with expected delivery in the summer of 2018. A resource assessment of the Section 1002 area will be deferred pending the acquisition of 3-D seismic data by industry. In the interim, the USGS will shift its efforts on resource assessments on Alaska's North Slope to accelerate the evaluation of the Central North Slope (CNS) lands situated between ANWR and

the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The expected completion date of the CNS assessment is December 2019; an assessment covering NPR-A was released in December 2017. Field work to support the broader North Slope effort is scheduled for this summer, with logistical planning now underway. (5/2/2018)

### **Upcoming USGS Publications**

[**NEW**] On June 4, USGS plans to release the latest dataset from the USMIN project, which is a joint effort with BLM and several state agencies. This release provides descriptions of more than 100 mining districts, mines, and mineral occurrences (deposits and prospects) in the United States that contain enrichments of tin. Tin is one of the 35 minerals deemed critical under Executive Order 13817. These mineral occurrences include mined deposits, exploration prospects, and other occurrences with notable concentrations of tin.

[**NEW**] USGS has recently released a new surficial geologic map of the Dillingham Quadrangle, Southwestern Alaska. This map and accompanying digital files are based on interpretation of aerial photographs from the 1950s as well as more modern imagery. This map will be a significant aid in the interpretation of stream sediment geochemistry as a component of a mineral resource assessment. (05/22/2018)

[**NEW**] USGS has recently released Standardized Precipitation Evaporation Index (SPEI) data from the Upper Green River Basin between 1897 and 2017. The SPEI incorporates both precipitation and temperature data, giving the capacity to include the effects of temperature variability on drought. The data were produced as an approach to quantify the effects of temperature and the frequency and intensity of wet and dry patterns across the study area and to specifically place the 2012 drought in a historical perspective. (05/22/18)

[**NEW**] USGS has recently released the first of several large datasets of reanalyzed sediment and soil samples from Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. The samples were collected in 1976-1980 as part of the Department of Energy-led National Uranium Resource Evaluation-Hydrogeochemical and Stream Sediment Reconnaissance (NURE-HSSR) program, and transferred to the USGS in 1984. For a portion of the western United States that contains several large mining districts, the USGS Mineral Resources Program is reanalyzing the samples using modern, consistent laboratory methods for 51 elements. Version 1.1, which contains several thousand more records, will be released within the next few weeks, with monthly updates expected. (05/22/18)

[**NEW**] In a new USGS report, prepared in cooperation with NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, scientists conduct four analyses to investigate the effect of proposed water intake facilities in California, referred to as the North Delta Diversion (NDD), and its proposed operation on survival of juvenile Chinook salmon. The USGS analyses used the results of a survival model that allowed scientists to simulate travel time, migration routing, and survival of juvenile Chinook salmon migrating through the Delta in response to NDD operations, which affected both inflows to the Delta and operation of the Delta Cross Channel (DCC). Information from this report will help fisheries managers address concerns about the extent to which

operation of the NDD would increase the proportion of the population entering the interior Delta and survival rates through different routes. (05/22/18)

[**NEW**] A new paper entitled “Substrate and flow characteristics associated with White Sturgeon recruitment in the Columbia River Basin” will be published in *Heliyon*. The study identifies habitat characteristics associated with age 0+ White Sturgeon recruitment in three reaches of the Columbia River Basin: Skamania reach (consistent recruitment), John Day reach (intermittent/inconsistent recruitment), and Kootenai reach (no recruitment). Model verification confirmed White Sturgeon generally spawned in locations with higher model probabilities in Skamania and Kootenai reaches, indicating the utility of extrapolating the models. Model simulations revealed significant gains in White Sturgeon habitat in all reaches when spring flow increased, gravel/cobble composition increased, or embeddedness decreased. The habitat models appear well suited to assist managers when identifying reach-specific factors limiting White Sturgeon recruitment in the Columbia River Basin or throughout its range. Partners of the study include Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bonneville Power Administration (05/22/18)

[**NEW**] A new paper entitled “Potential climate-driven shifts in grass-shrub abundance in drylands: Soil moisture effects may be overwhelmed by increased intra-annual variability in temperature” will be published in the journal, *Oecologia*. This study investigates the factors that control grass and shrub abundance in drylands, and project the potential effects of climate change on grasses and shrubs. Dryland systems are expected to be more arid with increased variability in temperature and precipitation and these factors, combined with soil characteristics, could influence the relative abundance of grasses and shrubs in the Southwest. Grass and shrub abundance is already an important issue in the Southwest due to shrub encroachment into grasslands over the past 150 years. Understanding how climate, soils, and plants interact can assist federal, state, and private resource managers prepare for possible changes in the systems they manage. This work was funded by the National Park Service and the USGS National Park Monitoring Program and was conducted in partnership with the National Park Service Inventory and Monitoring Program. (05/22/18)

[**NEW**] A new paper entitled “Isotope niche dimension and trophic overlap between bigheaded carps and native filter-feeding fish in the lower Missouri River” will be published in *PLOS*. Stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen were used to evaluate trophic niche overlap between invasive filter feeders bighead carp and silver carp, and native filter feeders bigmouth buffalo, gizzard shad, and paddlefish in the lower Missouri River. Bigmouth buffalo and gizzard shad had very high trophic overlap with the invasive fishes, indicating that they eat similar things. This offers support to previous works that speculate that declines in the condition of these native fishes since the invasion of the carps is a result of the invasion. Paddlefish trophic niche was higher than the other species, indicating a somewhat different food source in the Missouri River compared to the other species examined. (05/22/18)

[**NEW**] A new paper entitled “Sample sizes for monitoring: how many plots are enough, and can one size fit all?” will be published in *Rangeland Ecology and Management*. USGS researchers initiated an intensive effort to estimate sampling needs in post-fire monitoring in the area burned by the 2015 Soda Fire in Idaho. Monitoring post-disturbance recovery and land-treatment effects

on rangelands is often complicated by landscape variability within large management areas. They compared sampling efficiency of different sampling methods and plot sizes for different topographic, elevation, soil, vegetation, and land-treatment settings. The analysis focused on determining the number of plots per unit area or pasture required to achieve a benchmark standard error. (05/22/18)

## Conversation Contents

### OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release

#### Attachments:

/42. OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release/1.1 17-01308ad.docx  
/42. OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release/1.2 17-01308ca (Redacted).pdf  
/42. OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release/1.3 17-01308cb (Redacted).pdf  
/42. OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release/1.4 1308ca (Bracketed).pdf  
/42. OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release/1.5 1308cb (Bracketed).pdf  
/42. OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release/1.6 17-01308qa.pdf

**"Banco, Nicholas" <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Banco, Nicholas" <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri May 18 2018 14:17:31 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>, Daniel Jorjani <daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov>, Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>, Clarice Julka <clarice\_julka@ios.doi.gov>, Rachel Spector <rachel.spector@sol.doi.gov>  
**To:**  
**Subject:** OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release  
**Attachments:** 17-01308ad.docx 17-01308ca (Redacted).pdf 17-01308cb (Redacted).pdf 1308ca (Bracketed).pdf 1308cb (Bracketed).pdf 17-01308qa.pdf

Hi everyone,

Rachel Spector of SOL has concurred with OS' proposed withholdings for a potential partial response for litigation concerning Ms. Combs' external correspondence and calendar. Please find attached a copy of the request, draft partial response letter, as well as bracketed and redacted copies of the responsive materials. We intend on providing the materials to Plaintiff before the end of the month and therefore request your authorization to release the redacted versions no later than COB May 25, 2018.

I've cc'd Rachel on this email for awareness. Please do not hesitate to contact either of us with any questions or concerns.

Thanks,

Nick

--  
Nicholas Banco  
Department of the Interior  
Office of the Secretary, FOIA Office  
1849 C Street, NW, MS-7023  
Washington, D.C. 20240  
[Nicholas\\_Banco@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Nicholas_Banco@ios.doi.gov)  
(202) 513-0806 - phone

---

**Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri May 18 2018 14:43:56 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Banco, Nicholas" <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov>  
Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>, Daniel  
**CC:** Jorjani <daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov>, Clarice Julka  
<clarice\_julka@ios.doi.gov>, Rachel Spector  
<rachel.spector@sol.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review  
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I assume she has reviewed/approved as well? Laura Keehner Rigas Communications Director U.S. Department of the Interior (202) 208-6416 > On May 18, 2018, at 4:17 PM, Banco, Nicholas <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov> wrote: > > Hi everyone, > > Rachel Spector of SOL has concurred with OS' proposed withholdings for a > potential partial response for litigation concerning Ms. Combs' external > correspondence and calendar. Please find attached a copy of the request, > draft partial response letter, as well as bracketed and redacted copies of > the responsive materials. We intend on providing the materials to Plaintiff > before the end of the month and therefore request your authorization to > release the redacted versions no later than COB May 25, 2018. > > I've cc'd Rachel on this email for awareness. Please do not hesitate to > contact either of us with any questions or concerns. > > Thanks, > > Nick > -- > Nicholas Banco > Department of the Interior > Office of the Secretary, FOIA Office > 1849 C Street, NW, MS-7023 > Washington, D.C. 20240 > [Nicholas\\_Banco@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Nicholas_Banco@ios.doi.gov) > (202) 513-0806 - phone > <17-01308ad.docx> > <17-01308ca (Redacted).pdf> > <17-01308cb (Redacted).pdf> > <1308ca (Bracketed).pdf> > <1308cb (Bracketed).pdf> > <17-01308qa.pdf>

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**Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri May 18 2018 14:49:00 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review  
for Litigation Release

Just now got this email. Sent from my iPhone > On May 18, 2018, at 4:43 PM, Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov> wrote: > > I assume she has reviewed/approved as well? > > Laura Keehner Rigas > Communications Director > U.S. Department of the Interior > (202) 208-6416 > > > On May 18, 2018, at 4:17 PM, Banco, Nicholas <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov> wrote: > > > Hi everyone, > > > Rachel Spector of SOL has concurred with OS' proposed withholdings for a > > potential partial response for litigation



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**"Spector, Rachel" <rachel.spector@sol.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Spector, Rachel" <rachel.spector@sol.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri May 18 2018 14:52:56 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>  
**CC:** "Banco, Nicholas" <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov>, Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>, Daniel Jorjani <daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov>, Clarice Julka <clarice\_julka@ios.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review for Litigation Release

Hi all:

Yes. I reviewed it and agree with the proposed release/withholdings.

Thanks!

Rachel

Rachel Spector  
Division of General Law  
Office of the Solicitor  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 208-6029

On Fri, May 18, 2018 at 4:43 PM, Laura Rigas <[laura\\_rigas@ios.doi.gov](mailto:laura_rigas@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:  
I assume she has reviewed/approved as well?

Laura Keehner Rigas  
Communications Director  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
(202) 208-6416

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> Nicholas Banco  
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> Office of the Secretary, FOIA Office  
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**Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>**

**From:** Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Fri May 18 2018 14:53:41 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Laura Rigas <[laura\\_rigas@ios.doi.gov](mailto:laura_rigas@ios.doi.gov)>  
"Banco, Nicholas" <[nicholas\\_banco@ios.doi.gov](mailto:nicholas_banco@ios.doi.gov)>, Daniel  
**CC:** Jorjani <[daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov](mailto:daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov)>, Clarice Julka  
<[clarice\\_julka@ios.doi.gov](mailto:clarice_julka@ios.doi.gov)>, Rachel Spector  
<[rachel.spector@sol.doi.gov](mailto:rachel.spector@sol.doi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review  
for Litigation Release

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**"Banco, Nicholas" <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov>**

---

**From:** "Banco, Nicholas" <nicholas\_banco@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Thu May 24 2018 08:59:22 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** Susan Combs <susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov>  
Laura Rigas <laura\_rigas@ios.doi.gov>, Daniel Jorjani  
<daniel.jorjani@sol.doi.gov>, Clarice Julka  
**CC:** <clarice\_julka@ios.doi.gov>, Rachel Spector  
<rachel.spector@sol.doi.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review  
for Litigation Release

Hi Susan,

Is there anything in particular you have concerns about in the email packet? We're hoping to produce it next week.

Thanks,

Nick

On Fri, May 18, 2018 at 4:53 PM, Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:  
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Sent from my iPhone

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> Laura Keehner Rigas

> Communications Director

> U.S. Department of the Interior

> (202) 208-6416

>

>

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>> Thanks,

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>> Nick

>> --

>> Nicholas Banco

>> Department of the Interior

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[Nicholas\\_Banco@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Nicholas_Banco@ios.doi.gov)  
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**"Combs, Susan" <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>**

**From:** "Combs, Susan" <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thu May 24 2018 09:20:57 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
**To:** "Banco, Nicholas" <[nicholas\\_banco@ios.doi.gov](mailto:nicholas_banco@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: OS-2017-01308/ 3:18-cv-00797 Awareness Review  
for Litigation Release

think it all looked fine- except for any PII

On Thu, May 24, 2018 at 10:59 AM, Banco, Nicholas <[nicholas\\_banco@ios.doi.gov](mailto:nicholas_banco@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:  
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(202) 513-0806 - phone

--  
Susan Combs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1-202-208-4482



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
7202.4-OS-2017-01308

May XX, 2018

Via email: [Ellen.richmond@mto.com](mailto:Ellen.richmond@mto.com)

Ellen Richmond  
Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP  
560 Mission St., 27<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

*Re: Sierra Club v. U.S. Department of the Interior, 3:18-cv-00797 (N.D. Cal.)*

Dear Ms. Richmond:

On September 22, 2017, you filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request seeking the following:

Records of the following type in the possession, custody, or control of the U.S. Department of Interior ("DOI") for the time period starting from **January 23, 2017, through the date of your search for records in response to this request**, related to the following individuals (the "DOI Personnel"):

- A. Secretary of the Interior **Ryan Zinke**
  - B. Deputy Secretary of the Interior **David Bernhardt**
  - C. Associate Deputy Secretary of the Interior **James Cason**
  - D. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget **Scott Cameron**
  - E. Assistant Secretary for Policy Management, and Budget **Susan Combs**
1. All emails, text messages, faxes, voice mails, and other form of communications from, or to, the DOI Personnel with any person outside of DOI, as well as any phone logs or other indices which memorialize communications with such persons.
  2. All calendars, whether electronic or in paper format, of the DOI Personnel for the above listed time period.
  3. All sign-in sheets or other records memorializing attendance at any meetings with the DOI Personnel for the above-listed time period at which a person outside of DOI was in attendance.
  4. All emails, faxes, voicemails, text messages or other forms of communication that have been deleted that fit the above specifications and have been deleted, but remain

Ms. Ellen Richmond

recoverable in any way. If fulfilling this specification requires additional time, we would ask that production of documents meeting specifications 1-3 be given priority and processed separately from any potential responsive records to this specification.

Your request was received in the Office of the Secretary FOIA office on September 28, 2017 and acknowledged on October 6, 2017. On March 15, 2018, we provided an initial partial response to your request.

We are writing today to provide an second partial response to your request. Additional records will arrive under separate cover. We have enclosed two files consisting of 554 pages.

Of those 554 pages, 526 pages are being released in full and 28 pages contain redactions as described below.

**Portions of the enclosed documents have been redacted pursuant to Exemption 5 of the FOIA (5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(5)) under the following privileges:**

### **Confidential Commercial Information**

Exemption 5 allows an agency to withhold “inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party... in litigation with the agency” 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(5). As such, the Exemption 5 “exempt[s] those documents... normally privileged in the civil discovery context.” National Labor Relations Bd. v. Sears, Roebuck & Co., 421 U.S. 132, 149 (1975). The exemption incorporates the privileges that protect materials from discovery in litigation. These privileges include deliberative process, confidential commercial information, attorney work-product, and attorney-client. See id.; see also Federal Open Market Committee v. Merrill, 443 U.S. 340, 363 (1979) (finding a confidential commercial information privilege under Exemption 5).

#### *Confidential Commercial Information Privilege*

When the government enters the marketplace as an ordinary commercial buyer or seller, the government information is protected from competitive disadvantage under Exemption 5. Government Land Bank v. General Services Administration, 671 F.2d 663, 665 (1<sup>st</sup> Cir. 1982). Exemption 5 prevails “where the document contains ‘sensitive information not otherwise available,’ and disclosure would significantly harm the government’s commercial interest.” Id. at 666; see also Merrill, 443 U.S. at 363.

Pursuant to the confidential commercial information privilege, conference call codes and passcodes have been withheld under Exemption 5. This information constitutes “intra-agency” documents because they are only shared with members of the Department of the Interior for the purpose of conducting official government business. Moreover, this information qualifies as “confidential commercial information” because the government entered the marketplace as an ordinary commercial buyer.

In line with Land Bank and Merrill, the information is “sensitive and not otherwise available.” If the information was released, the government’s financial interest would be significantly harmed. The

Ms. Ellen Richmond

conference calls would no longer be private since unknown, non-governmental parties would have the ability to listen in to the calls. The funds spent on purchasing the information would therefore be wasted, and the information would be of no use.

Because we reasonably foresee that the release of this information would significantly harm the government's financial interest by publicizing sensitive information, the Office of the Secretary is withholding it in accordance with Exemption 5 of the FOIA.

**Portions of the enclosed documents have been redacted pursuant to Exemption 6 of the FOIA (5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)) because they fit certain categories of information:**

**Personal Email Addresses  
Personal Information**

Exemption 6 allows an agency to withhold "personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." The courts have held that the phrase "similar files" involves all information that applies to a particular person. Hertzberg v. Veneman, 273 F. Supp. 2d 67, 85 n.11 (D.D.C. 2003).

To determine whether releasing requested information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, we are required to perform a "balancing test." This means that we must weigh the individual's right to privacy against the public's right to disclosure.

- (1) First, we must determine whether the individual has a discernable privacy interest in the information that has been requested.
- (2) Next, we must determine whether release of this information would serve "the public interest generally" (i.e., would "shed light on the performance of the agency's statutory duties").
- (3) Finally, we must determine whether the public interest in disclosure is greater than the privacy interest of the individual in withholding.

The information that we are withholding consists of personal information, and we have determined that the individuals to whom this information pertains have a substantial privacy interest in it. Additionally, we have determined that the disclosure of this information would shed little or no light on the performance of the agency's statutory duties and that, on balance, the public interest to be served by its disclosure does not outweigh the privacy interest of the individuals in question, in withholding it. Nat'l Ass'n of Retired Fed. Employees v. Horner, 879 F.2d 873, 879 (D.C. Cir. 1989).

In summation, we have determined that release of the information that we have withheld would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of the privacy of these individuals, and that it therefore may be withheld, pursuant to Exemption 6.

Rachel Spector, Attorney-Advisor, in the Office of the Solicitor, was consulted in reaching this decision. Clarice Julka, Office of the Secretary FOIA Officer, is responsible for making this partial denial.



Ms. Ellen Richmond

If you have any questions about our response to your request, you may contact James Scharf, Assistant United States Attorney, by phone at (408) 535-5044 or by email at [James.Scharf@usdoj.gov](mailto:James.Scharf@usdoj.gov).

Sincerely,

Clarice Julka  
Office of the Secretary  
FOIA Officer

Electronic Enclosures

**From:** Combs, Susan  
**To:** [audrey\\_haskins@ios.doi.gov](mailto:audrey_haskins@ios.doi.gov)  
**Subject:** Re: Invitation: Mtg. with Joshua Johnson @ Wed Jan 31, 2018 11:30am - 12:30pm (EST)  
**Date:** **Susan Combs - (b) (6)**  
Friday, January 26, 2018 1:10:54 PM

---

Susan Combs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1-202-208-4482

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 1:08 PM, Susan Combs **(b) (6)** wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** <[audrey\\_haskins@ios.doi.gov](mailto:audrey_haskins@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Date:** January 26, 2018 at 10:45:59 AM EST  
**To:** **Susan Combs - (b) (6)**, <[john\\_tanner@ios.doi.gov](mailto:john_tanner@ios.doi.gov)>, <[jjohnson@bdiwins.com](mailto:jjohnson@bdiwins.com)>  
**Subject:** Invitation: Mtg. with Joshua Johnson @ Wed Jan 31, 2018 11:30am - 12:30pm (EST) **Susan Combs - (b) (6)**  
**Reply-To:** <[audrey\\_haskins@ios.doi.gov](mailto:audrey_haskins@ios.doi.gov)>

**Mtg. with Joshua Johnson**

[more details »](#)

When Wed Jan 31, 2018 11:30am – 12:30pm Eastern Time

Video call

**(b) (5), (b) (6)**

Calendar

**Susan Combs - (b) (6)**

Who

- [audrey\\_haskins@ios.doi.gov](mailto:audrey_haskins@ios.doi.gov) - organizer
- [john\\_tanner@ios.doi.gov](mailto:john_tanner@ios.doi.gov)
- **Susan Combs - (b) (6)**
- [jjohnson@bdiwins.com](mailto:jjohnson@bdiwins.com)

Going? [Yes](#) - [Maybe](#) - [No](#) [more options »](#)

Invitation from [Google Calendar](#)

You are receiving this courtesy email at the account **Susan Combs - (b) (6)** because you are an attendee of this event.

To stop receiving future updates for this event, decline this event. Alternatively you can sign up for a Google account at <https://www.google.com/calendar/> and control your notification settings for your entire calendar.

Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to modify your RSVP response. [Learn More](#)

**From:** Susan Combs  
**To:** [Chambers, Micah](#)  
**Cc:** [Ryan Nelson](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Committee Advances Four Energy and Interior Nominees  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 30, 2018 5:03:35 PM

---

Thx

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 30, 2018, at 4:30 PM, Chambers, Micah <[micah\\_chambers@ios.doi.gov](mailto:micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

FYI. Voice vote, no opposition.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Majority Press (Energy)** <[press@energy.senate.gov](mailto:press@energy.senate.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Jan 30, 2018 at 3:45 PM  
Subject: Committee Advances Four Energy and Interior Nominees  
To: "Majority Press (Energy)" <[press@energy.senate.gov](mailto:press@energy.senate.gov)>

[<image001.jpg>](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [Nicole Daigle](#)  
202.224.2576

January 30, 2018

[Permalink](#)

## **Committee Advances Four Energy and Interior Nominees**

*Also Ratifies Revised Subcommittee Rosters for the 2nd Session of the 115th Congress*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources today held a business meeting to advance four of President Trump’s nominees for the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of the Interior (DOI):

- **Melissa Burnison** to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs;
- **Susan Combs** to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Policy,

Management, and Budget;

- **Ryan Nelson** to be Solicitor for the Department of the Interior; and
- **Anne White** to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environmental Management.

The committee favorably reported Burnison, Combs, Nelson, and White by voice vote.

Murkowski supported all four nominations, which now head to the Senate floor.

During the business meeting, the committee also ratified revised subcommittee assignments. All changes are in ***bold italics***:

### **ENERGY**

Cory Gardner, *Chairman*

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| James E. Risch                         | Joe Manchin III, <i>Ranking</i> |
| Jeff Flake                             | Ron Wyden                       |
| Steve Daines                           | Bernard Sanders                 |
| Lamar Alexander                        | Martin Heinrich                 |
| John Hoeven                            | Angus S. King,<br>Jr.           |
| Bill Cassidy                           | Tammy Duckworth                 |
| Rob Portman                            | <b><i>Tina Smith</i></b>        |
| <b><i>Shelley Moore<br/>Capito</i></b> |                                 |

### **NATIONAL PARKS**

Steve Daines, *Chairman*

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| John Barrasso | <b><i>Angus S. King, Jr., Ranking</i></b> |
| Mike Lee      | Bernard Sanders                           |

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Cory Gardner    | Debbie Stabenow |
| Lamar Alexander | Martin Heinrich |
| John Hoeven     | Mazie Hirono    |
| Rob Portman     | Tammy Duckworth |

**PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS,  
AND MINING**

Mike  
Lee,  
*Chairman*

|                                    |                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| John Barrasso                      | Ron Wyden, <i>Ranking</i> |
| James E. Risch                     | Debbie Stabenow           |
| Jeff Flake                         | Joe Manchin III           |
| Steve Daines                       | Martin Heinrich           |
| Cory Gardner                       | Mazie Hirono              |
| Lamar Alexander                    | Catherine Cortez Masto    |
| John Hoeven                        | <b><i>Tina Smith</i></b>  |
| Bill Cassidy                       |                           |
| <b><i>Shelley Moore Capito</i></b> |                           |

**WATER AND POWER**

Jeff Flake, *Chairman*

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| John Barrasso  | <b><i>Catherine Cortez Masto, Ranking</i></b> |
| James E. Risch | Ron Wyden                                     |
| Mike Lee       | Bernard Sanders                               |

Bill Cassidy

Joe Manchin III

Rob Portman

Tammy Duckworth

***Shelley Moore Capito Tina Smith***

Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell are *ex officio* members of all subcommittees.

###

**[Energy.Senate.Gov](http://Energy.Senate.Gov)**

[<image002.png><image003.png><image004.png>](#)

*Note: Please do not reply to this email. This mailbox is unattended. For further information, please contact Nicole Daigle at 202-224-2576. Visit our website at <http://energy.senate.gov>*

--

Micah Chambers  
Deputy Director  
Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs  
Office of the Secretary of the Interior

**From:** Susan Combs  
**To:** [Ryan Nelson](#)  
**Cc:** [Chambers, Micah](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Committee Advances Four Energy and Interior Nominees  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 30, 2018 6:30:00 PM

---

Yep

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 30, 2018, at 6:22 PM, Ryan Nelson <[rnelson@melaleuca.com](mailto:rnelson@melaleuca.com)> wrote:

I was told Hirono and Wyden voted no.

Ryan

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 30, 2018, at 3:03 PM, Susan Combs <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

Thx

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 30, 2018, at 4:30 PM, Chambers, Micah  
<[micah\\_chambers@ios.doi.gov](mailto:micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov)> wrote:

FYI. Voice vote, no opposition.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Majority Press (Energy)** <[press@energy.senate.gov](mailto:press@energy.senate.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Jan 30, 2018 at 3:45 PM  
Subject: Committee Advances Four Energy and Interior  
Nominees  
To: "Majority Press (Energy)" <[press@energy.senate.gov](mailto:press@energy.senate.gov)>

[<image001.jpg>](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 30, 2018

[Permalink](#)

CONTACT: [Nicole Daigle](#)  
202.224.2576

## **Committee Advances Four Energy and Interior Nominees**

*Also Ratifies Revised Subcommittee Rosters for the 2nd Session of the 115th*

*Congress*

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**ENERGY**

Cory Gardner, *Chairman*

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| James E. Risch                         | Joe Manchin III, <i>Ranking</i> |
| Jeff Flake                             | Ron Wyden                       |
| Steve Daines                           | Bernard Sanders                 |
| Lamar Alexander                        | Martin Heinrich                 |
| John Hoeven                            | Angus S. King,<br>Jr.           |
| Bill Cassidy                           | Tammy Duckworth                 |
| Rob Portman                            | <b><i>Tina Smith</i></b>        |
| <b><i>Shelley Moore<br/>Capito</i></b> |                                 |



## NATIONAL PARKS

Steve Daines, *Chairman*

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| John Barrasso   | <b><i>Angus S. King, Jr., Ranking</i></b> |
| Mike Lee        | Bernard Sanders                           |
| Cory Gardner    | Debbie Stabenow                           |
| Lamar Alexander | Martin Heinrich                           |
| John Hoeven     | Mazie K. Hirono                           |
| Rob Portman     | Tammy Duckworth                           |

## PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

Mike  
Lee,  
*Chairman*

|                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| John Barrasso   | Ron Wyden, <i>Ranking</i> |
| James E. Risch  | Debbie Stabenow           |
| Jeff Flake      | Joe Manchin III           |
| Steve Daines    | Martin Heinrich           |
| Cory Gardner    | Mazie K. Hirono           |
| Lamar Alexander | Catherine Cortez Masto    |
| John Hoeven     | <b><i>Tina Smith</i></b>  |
| Bill Cassidy    |                           |

***Shelley Moore Capito***

## WATER AND POWER

Jeff Flake, *Chairman*

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| John Barrasso | <b><i>Catherine Cortez Masto, Ranking</i></b> |
|---------------|---|

|                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| James E. Risch                     | Ron Wyden                |
| Mike Lee                           | Bernard Sanders          |
| Bill Cassidy                       | Joe Manchin III          |
| Rob Portman                        | Tammy Duckworth          |
| <b><i>Shelley Moore Capito</i></b> | <b><i>Tina Smith</i></b> |

Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell are *ex officio* members of all subcommittees.

###

[Energy.Senate.Gov](http://Energy.Senate.Gov)

[<image002.png><image003.png><image004.png>](#)

*Note: Please do not reply to this email. This mailbox is unattended. For further information, please contact Nicole Daigle at 202-224-2576. Visit our website at <http://energy.senate.gov>*

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Micah Chambers  
Deputy Director  
Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs  
Office of the Secretary of the Interior

**From:** Bulletin Intelligence  
**To:** [Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com](mailto:Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com)  
**Subject:** U S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 2, 2018  
**Date:** Friday, February 02, 2018 6:00:57 AM

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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## DOI In The News

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### Interior Secretary Addresses Reorganization, Budget Cuts In Town Hall Meeting With Employees.

The [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (2/1, Scott) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Thursday "defended his pledge to rebuild his department during a town hall for department employees, saying the reorganization plan will not cut jobs or bureaus but will help streamline its mission." In a video feed to the department's 70,000 workers, Zinke said, "Last year was about energy. This coming year is different. This coming year, we are going to rebuild Interior. Because our parks are being loved to death. Our refuges are being challenged. Our schools are in shoddy shape. If you go out to Denver and look at our USGS building, it looks like a trailer park. I went out and looked at a range out of Las Vegas and it looked like shooting at a garbage dump. And that property belongs to the people. So, we are going to rebuild."

[The Hill](#) (2/1, Green) reports that "Zinke promised Thursday that no jobs would be lost or bureaus cut in the agency's proposed restructuring plans." He said, "At the end of day I don't think we're going to lose anyone in terms of numbers. I think numbers will be pushed more to the front line." According to the article, "instead of cutting jobs or merging bureaus, Zinke said the plan's focus was on better coordination and on moving bureaus with similar tasks under the same leadership so 'all interests are represented.'"

Additional coverage of the reorganization plan was provided by [Newsmax](#) (2/1, Jones).

### Trump Administration Tears Down Regulations To Speed Drilling On Public Land.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/1, Fears) reports that on Thursday, the Interior Department released a memorandum that orders its field offices "'to simplify and streamline the leasing process' so that federal leases to the oil and gas industry can be expedited 'to ensure quarterly oil and gas lease sales are consistently held.'" The memo stated that by doing so, "impediments and burdens" will be eased in processing a drilling project's environmental review. The department's "new approach requires the Bureau of Land Management to process a proposed lease within 60 days." The department's memo also shortened the public protest period of finalized leases to 10 days and ended "Master Lease Plans" that were started under the Obama Administration.

[The Hill](#) (2/1, Cama) reports that the Department of the Interior Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt said, "oil and gas lease sales on public land directly support domestic energy production and the President's energy dominance and job growth priorities for America." Bernhardt added, "2017 was a big year for oil and gas leasing on federal lands, and these sales provide critical revenue and job growth in rural America."

[Reuters](#) (2/1, Volcovici) reports that Wilderness Society Senior Counsel Nada Culver said, "the clear direction is to issue as many leases as possible, as quickly as possible, without considering resource conflicts or the desires of local communities."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/1, Siciliano) and the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/2, Webb) also report.

### Trump Administration Takes Aim At California Desert Protection Plan.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/1, Halper) reports "the Trump Administration is threatening to scrap" the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, which "sought to protect millions of acres of the California desert by placing sensitive areas off-limits to major solar- and wind-energy installations." The initiative "covers more than 10.8 million acres and was designed to guide energy facilities to parcels where they are least likely to cause environmental damage." The effort to eliminate it "comes as some energy firms and local governments complained the plan was too restrictive, placing off-limits land they have been seeking to develop."

Also reporting are [E&E Publishing](#) (2/1, Streater), the [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (2/1, Roth), the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/2, Lochhead), the [San Bernardino \(CA\) Sun](#) (2/1, Steinberg), the [Orange County \(CA\) Register](#) (2/1, Steinberg), and the [San Gabriel Valley \(CA\) Tribune](#) (2/1, Steinberg).

### **Zinke's Agency Held Up Indians' Casino After MGM Lobbying.**

[Politico](#) (2/1, Juliano) says the Mohegan and Mashantucket Pequot tribes are "accusing Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke of illegally blocking their plans" to build a third Connecticut casino by declining to make any decision after the tribes submitted their plan. According to Politico, which reviewed Zinke's schedule, "lobbying registrations, and other documents," the Interior Department's "refusal to sign off" on the tribes' plans "came after Zinke and other senior department officials held numerous meetings and phone calls with MGM lobbyists and the company's Republican supporters in Congress."

[The Hill](#) (2/1, Cama) says that, according to Politico's review of internal documents, "there is no evidence that the casino issue came up" during Zinke's meetings with MGM. The Hill also says MGM "is developing a competing project in nearby Massachusetts."

Meanwhile, the [Nation Sun News](#) (2/1) reports that "Gale Norton, a former Secretary of the Interior during the George W. Bush administration, is part of a major lobbying effort aimed at defeating a tribally-owned casino in Connecticut." Norton "was hired by MGM Resorts International, a non-Indian gaming company that opposes the new casino, POLITICO reported."

Additional coverage was provided by the [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (2/1, Hallenbeck), [Casino News](#) (2/1, Horridge), [Newsmax](#) (2/1, Crowe), and [WTIC-TV](#) Hartford, CT (2/1, Deangelis).

### **Attorneys General Urge Offshore Drilling Plan's Cancellation.**

The [AP](#) (2/1) reports that "the top lawyers for a dozen coastal states want the U.S. Interior Department to cancel the Trump administration's plan to expand offshore drilling, warning it threatens their maritime economies and natural resources." The attorneys general, "all Democrats, wrote Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Thursday about his agency's proposed five-year oil and gas leasing plan that opens new ocean waters." North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein, who says he assembled the coalition, "also told federal regulators this week that proposed changes to drilling safety requirements will increase exploration risks."

***West Coast States Ramp Up Opposition To Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan.*** The [Salem \(OR\) Statesman Journal](#) (2/1, Loew) reports that "opponents of President Donald Trump's proposal to open the entire West Coast to offshore oil drilling are organizing large protests to coincide with public hearings on the plan next week." On Tuesday, "a group of 16 federal lawmakers from Oregon and Washington sent a letter to U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke calling for the two states to be removed from the program." The wrote, "The states of Washington and Oregon have made clear through local, state and federal action, as well as extensive public comment, that oil and gas lease sales off the Pacific Coast are not in the best interest of our economies or environment. The importance of marine resources to our regional economy and the level of local opposition to offshore oil and gas development cannot be overstated."

***Governor: State 'Low-Target Area' For Potential Offshore Drilling.*** The [AP](#) (2/1, McCormack) reports that New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu "said Thursday he understands the state is a 'low-target area' for potential offshore drilling announced by the Trump administration." Sununu met with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday. Sununu said, "It was clear that we were a low-target area for them and that our feelings on the matter would be strongly considered."

***Governor Threatens To Sue Feds If NC Coast Isn't Exempt From Offshore Oil Drilling.*** The [Monroe \(NC\) Enquirer Journal](#) (2/1) reports that North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper sent a letter Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke requesting public hearings on the federal offshore drilling plan as well as a 60-day extension of the federal public comment period. N.C. Petroleum Council David McGowan said he believes the requests are "just a delay tactic, and they're going to pull out every stop." McGowan said he supports further public comment, noting that it "would take 10 to

15 years before drilling produced any oil or natural gas, and there would be plenty of time for additional public input.” However, he questioned whether Gov. Cooper “also opposes seismic surveys for installations of offshore wind turbines once we come to that point in the process with developers of those facilities,” noting that it is “essentially the same technology, and the same vessels pulling the same type of equipment.”

### **Westwood Student Wins Recognition For Forgotten Civil Rights Mural.**

The [Boston Globe](#) (2/1, Takahama) reports that “on Thursday, the first day of this year’s Black History Month,” Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke led a ceremony in Washington, naming a mural depicting African-American singer Marian Anderson’s concert at the Lincoln Memorial in 1939 “as the first element within the new US Civil Rights Network, a program intended to preserve and protect the memory of the civil rights movement.” Zinke said in a statement, “The civil rights movement is one of the most moving chapters of the American story – the people and events that shaped this period of history continue to inspire Americans to this day.” The article notes that high school student Desmond Herzfelder, who “pushed for recognition” for the “little-known mural,” was in attendance at the ceremony.

### **In Interview, Sec. Zinke Responds To State-Wide Alaskan Issues.**

[KTUU-TV](#) Anchorage, AK (2/1, Polk) reports that in an interview, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke talked about Alaskan issues, including “a land swap to allow a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, the resignation of several National Park Advisory Board members, including former Alaska Gov. Tony Knowles, the possibility to change the name of Denali back to Mt. McKinley, and commercial fishing and salmon runs.” Zinke said that the construction of a road to King Cove is “absolutely the right thing to do.” When asked about former Alaska State Gov. Tony Knowles, “who recently resigned from the National Park Advisory Board, citing that he felt the board was being shunned by the department, Zinke brushed the criticism off.” Regarding President Trump’s campaign pledge to change the name of Denali back to Mt. McKinley, “Zinke stuck to his prior statements that supported the Obama-era name change.” Finally, “Zinke spoke about the possibility of the federal government stepping in to address concerns from fishing communities that over fishing is effecting the salmon runs.” He said, “(The fishing industry) is the most highly regulated activity, and they do it right. Our regulatory framework I think is appropriate.”

Additional coverage [KTUU-TV](#) Anchorage, AK (2/1) and [KTUU-TV](#) Anchorage, AK (2/1).

### **Trump Explains Support For Oil Drilling In Arctic Refuge.**

The [AP](#) (2/1, Joling) reports that President Trump asserted “Thursday he ‘really didn’t care’ about opening a portion of Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling but insisted it be included in tax legislation at the urging of others.” Speaking to Republican legislators in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, Trump said, “A friend of mine called up, who’s in that world and in that business, and said, ‘Is it true that you’re thinking about ANWR?’ I said, ‘Yeah, I think we’re going to get it, but you know.’ He said, ‘Are you kidding? That’s the biggest thing, by itself.’ He said, ‘Ronald Reagan and every president has wanted to get ANWR approved. ... I really didn’t care about it, and then when I heard that everybody wanted it – for 40 years, they’ve been trying to get it approved, and I said, ‘Make sure you don’t lose ANWR.’”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Huffington Post](#) (2/1, D’Angelo).

### **Trump Says He Has An ‘All-Of-The-Above’ Energy Strategy, But Coal Gets Top Billing.**

The [Washington Post](#), (2/1, Grandoni) in the “Energy 202” blog, reports that despite adopting an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy, President Trump did not mention any energy source except coal during his recent State of the Union address. On the topic of energy, Trump said, “We have ended the war on American energy, and we have ended the war on beautiful, clean coal. We are now very proudly an exporter of energy to the world.” He also mentioned ExxonMobil’s announcement of \$50 billion investment in the United States. Ahead of the speech, American Petroleum Institute Jack Gerard said, “I expect and am quite confident energy will be part of the speech because it underlies all of the issues that he’s going to talk about it.” Meanwhile, the renewable sector took notice of the absence, with American Council on Renewable Energy president Greg Wetstone saying, “It is disappointing, but hardly a surprise that renewable energy was not mentioned in the State of the Union, despite the reality that wind and solar power are growing to the tune of nearly \$50 billion annually.”

### **Miami Boat Show Innovation Breakfast Agenda, Keynote Speaker Announced.**

The [Boating Industry](#) (2/1) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke will deliver the keynote address at the National Marine Manufacturers Association's Innovation Breakfast on Feb. 16. The association and "its partners in the Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable have been working with Zinke to explore enhancing boating and fishing access in our nation's public waterways." Zinke has "been a significant supporter of recreational boating and fishing and recently announced the creation of a Recreation Advisory Committee to help explore how to improve outdoor recreation opportunities for Americans." NMMA president Thom Dammrich said, "It's our honor to welcome Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to the 2018 Miami International Boat Show as keynote speaker and to witness firsthand the impact and forward-thinking of America's recreational boating and fishing industry. The Secretary has demonstrated his commitment to ensuring Americans have robust access to our public lands and waters and has worked to create a dialogue with the outdoor community to understand our priorities. His keynote is an opportunity to hear directly from the Secretary as he shares his perspective on boating and the outdoors."

#### **Inspector General: Park Police's Body Camera Policies Subpar.**

[The Hill](#) (2/1, Green) reports that the Interior Department's Office of the Inspector General "concluded Thursday that subpar drafted policies on body camera use present a risk to the Interior Department and its bureaus, including the U.S. Park Police." The Interior Department "currently lacks a finalized official policy on the use of body cameras by law enforcement." The watchdog's "recommendations for the draft policy included standards for controls over body camera recordings, prohibiting manipulation of devices and a ban on sharing recordings." The report said, "Implementation of a successful body camera program is at risk, particularly in areas such as data quality, systems security, and privacy. The inconsistent use of body cameras and failure to adhere to industry standards also increases the risk that investigative or judicial proceedings will be challenged for failure to properly maintain evidence chain of custody, and could lead to an erosion of public trust in bureau law enforcement programs."

### **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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#### **Tribal Officials Critical Of Reservation Fugitive Bill.**

The [AP](#) (2/1) reports that "a bill introduced by U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem which would make it easier for state officials to extradite fugitives from American Indian reservations is drawing criticism from tribal officials in South Dakota." The legislation would "allow state authorities to request a federal warrant for fugitives who travel to a reservation." But Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Chairman Harold Frazier said "procedures are already in place for extradition, so there's no need for the law."

#### **FBI, BIA Investigating Double Homicide At McDermitt Reservation.**

The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (2/1, Litz) reports the FBI, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Humboldt County Sheriff's Office "are investigating two deaths at the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation." According to a news release issued Thursday, "two women were found dead at a home on the reservation on Wednesday" in what authorities have confirmed was a double homicide. Sheriff Mike Allen said in a statement, "A search warrant was obtained and executed by federal authorities for a residence at the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation late yesterday afternoon. Once investigators entered the residence and processed the scene, it was evident that it was a double homicide."

### **Bureau Of Land Management**

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#### **Bureau Of Land Management Generated Nearly \$360 Million From Oil & Gas Lease Sales.**

The [Lewis-Clark Valley DailyFLY \(WA\)](#) (2/1) reports that the Bureau of Land Management "generated nearly \$360 million from oil and gas lease sales in 2017 which is an 86% increase over the previous year's results of \$192.5 million." Deputy Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt said, "2017 was a big year for oil and gas leasing on federal lands, and these sales provide critical revenue and job growth in rural America. We will continue to work into the next year to identify and modify unnecessary regulations that impede responsible energy development." Brian Steed, BLM Deputy Director for Policy and Programs, said, "These results are hard proof that our sound energy policy is working for both public lands and Americans in terms



of reliable power and job growth opportunities. Going into the new year, we remain committed to an era of American energy dominance through our multiple-use mission that ensures opportunities for commercial, recreational, and conservation activities on healthy and productive public lands.”

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Salmon Reproduce In River For First Time In 60 Years.**

The [AP](#) (2/1) reports that “scientists are seeing promising signs that salmon can thrive in a restored California river.” According to the article, “Chinook salmon successfully spawned, laying eggs in the Joaquin River that incubated and hatched into tiny fry as the sexually mature fish died, part of the species’ unusual life cycle.” The AP says that “biologists working with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation’s San Joaquin River Restoration Project began catching the juvenile fish in traps in November and December.”

### **Congress Considers Funding For Yakima Water Plan.**

The [Ellensburg \(WA\) Daily Record](#) (2/1, Thompson) reports that “crucial federal funding to improve the Yakima River Basin’s water supply is once again before Congress, but language in a House bill could spell trouble.” Legislation “introduced last November by Rep. Dan Newhouse and co-sponsored by Rep. Dan Reichert would provide \$237 million in much-needed matching funds to help pay for various basin projects to aid during times of drought.” However, “the bill also includes provisions that would speed up environmental reviews of the basin projects and similar projects across the country – and that could mean problems in the Senate.”

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Judge: US Must Reconsider Yellowstone Bison Protections.**

The [AP](#) (2/1, Brown) reports that “a federal judge has ordered U.S. wildlife officials to reconsider a 2015 decision that blocked special protections for the iconic bison herds that roam Yellowstone National Park and are routinely subjected to hunting and slaughter.” U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper “said in a ruling late Wednesday that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service could not ‘simply pick and choose’ between conflicting science, after the agency rejected a study suggesting the park’s bison population might be too small to sustain its two herds.” According to the article, “the government’s reconsideration of protections will take several months at a minimum and is not expected to affect this winter’s capture and slaughter program.”

Also reporting are [Reuters](#) (2/2, Zuckerman), the [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (2/1, Wright), [Yellowstone Insider](#) (2/1, Reichard), [Courthouse News](#) (2/1, Buchman), and [Law360](#) (2/1, Phillis).

### **Fish And Wildlife Division: Tinian Monarch Population Relatively Secure.**

[Marianas Variety](#) (2/2, Lirio) reports that “the Tinian monarch population is ‘relatively secure,’ according to Jill Liske-Clark, acting wildlife supervisor of the Department of Land and Natural Resources-Division of Fish and Wildlife.” Liske-Clark “said the current population of the birds on Tinian is about 90,000.” The Center for Biological Diversity has “filed a notice of intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for failing to act on a petition to protect the Tinian monarch under the Endangered Species Act.”

### **Wildlife Service Reinforces Claim To Monomoy Refuge.**

The [Harwich \(MA\) Oracle](#) (2/2, Fitzgerald) reports that “the battle over what constitutes the western boundary of the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge continues while Chatham waits to see whether a bill filed by Rep. William Keating will undo what the town calls an illegal taking by the federal government.” At issue is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s 2015 Comprehensive Conservation Plan, “which declared that the open waters and seabed to the west of Monomoy Island – and the fisheries within the area – belong to the refuge and are under federal control.” According to the article, “the assertion is at odds with what had been, over the course of many decades, local and state oversight of the area, which is spread across some 4,000 acres rich in shellfish and other natural resources.”

## National Park Service

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### Southern California Cougar In Study Found Dead Near Road.

The [AP](#) (2/1) reports that "a Southern California mountain lion that was part of a study by federal biologists was found dead after apparently being struck by a vehicle, the National Park Service said Thursday." According to the article, "the remains of the 5½-year-old female lion known as P-23 were recovered this week near Malibu Canyon Road in western Los Angeles County." Biologist Jeff Sikich of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area said, "Unfortunately, her life came to an end prematurely due to the challenge of navigating the complex road network in this area."

Also reporting are the [Huffington Post](#) (2/2, Papenfuss), the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/1, Mejia), the [San Jose \(CA\) Mercury News](#) (2/1, Carter), the [Orange County \(CA\) Register](#) (2/1, Carter), the [Los Angeles Daily News](#) (2/1, Carter), and [KNBC-TV Los Angeles](#) Los Angeles (2/1).

### New Superintendent Chosen For Mount Rainier National Park.

The [AP](#) (2/1) reports that the National Park Service has named Palmer "Chip" Jenkins, Jr., to be the next superintendent at Mount Rainier National Park. Jenkins will begin "his new role in mid-March, replacing Randy King who retired in January." Since March 2017, he has "been on temporary assignment to Yosemite National Park as the park's acting superintendent."

### Digital Entrance Pass Now Available For Yellowstone National Park.

The [Livingston \(MT\) Enterprise](#) (2/1) reports that starting Thursday, "visitors to Yellowstone National Park can purchase digital annual and seven-day entrance passes online at YourPassNow." The National Park Service "partnered with NIC Inc. to develop and administer YourPassNow to better serve visitors to Yellowstone, the park said." Park superintendent Dan Wenk said, "We are pleased to offer a digital option to purchasing passes at entrance gates and to usher in a new era of online convenience for our visitors."

Also reporting are [Yellowstone Insider](#) (2/1, Reichard) and [KPVI-TV Idaho Falls \(ID\)](#) Idaho Falls, ID (2/1).

### 3 Hawai'i National Parks Seeks Input On Proposed Tri-Park Pass Fee Increase.

The [Big Island \(HI\) Now](#) (2/1) reports that the National Park Service seeks public input on a proposed fee increase for the Tri-Park Pass, "an annual pass that allows visitors unlimited entry to the three fee-charging national parks in Hawai'i: Hawai'i Volcanoes and Pu'uuhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park on Hawai'i Island and Haleakala National Park on Maui." The [Big Island \(HI\) Video News](#) (2/1) reports that a proposed fee hike from \$30 to \$50 would begin May 1, 2018 and ensure "the Hawai'i parks have the same pricing structure as other national parks with similar visitor amenities," the National Park Service says. The public comment period ends March 2, 2018.

### A Glimpse Into The Future Of Getting To Alcatraz.

[KQED-FM](#) San Francisco (2/1, Veltman) reports that "the National Park Service, Port of San Francisco and Parks Conservancy are working on a plan" to better serve Alcatraz visitors. Brian Aviles, the park's chief of planning, said, "The proposal is for greatly improved operations. Right now, the site is kind of chaotic." According to Aviles, "the total budget for the project will come in at more than \$20 million, and that the money to pay for the redevelopment of the site will come from the ferry operator – not the taxpayer."

### Radium Found At Spring Creek Park.

The [Queens \(NY\) Chronicle](#) (2/1, O'Reilly) reports that "traces of radium were recently discovered in Spring Creek Park, but there is no threat to surrounding residents or those walking in the preserve, a federal official told those present at Tuesday's meeting of the Howard Beach-Lindenwood Civic Association." Kathleen Cuzzolino, an environmental protection specialist with the National Park Service, said, "Nothing that we feel is a risk at this time for those walking along the trails."

### Public Weighs In On Pullman Connection.

The [Hot Springs \(AR\) Sentinel-Record](#) (2/1, Reed) reports that the National Park Service, "during a public open house Tuesday, stressed the importance of submitting comments on the proposed

Pullman Avenue trail connection to the Northwoods Urban Forest Park project." The NPS hosted a public meeting "to engage the community in the conversation surrounding the project in relation to the Northwoods project." Hot Springs National Park Superintendent Josie Fernandez said, "What we want is for people to leave their comments. People can say what they believe should or shouldn't be done all day long, but what we need are the submitted comments, either on paper or online."

## **Office Of Insular Affairs**

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### **Visit To RMI A Plus For Interior.**

The [Marshall Islands Journal](#) (1/26) reported that Assistant Secretary of Interior Doug Domenech "made multiple site visits during his two-and-a-half days on Majuro last week, and made it to Kwajalein and Ebeye for tours despite a 24-hour delay in the scheduled air service by United Airlines." Domenech had "meetings with President Hilda Heine and her Cabinet, Marshallese military veterans, and the KBE Council, and visits to Rita Elementary School, Alele Museum, Youth to Youth in Health, and the fish farm hatchery in Ajeltake run by Aquaculture Technology of the Marshall Islands." Domenech said, "All the visits were outstanding."

### **White House Official Publicizes Tweet From Rita Elementary School.**

The [Marshall Islands Journal](#) (1/26) reported that a tweet that Assistant Secretary of Interior Doug Domenech posted on his visit to Rita Elementary school last week was re-tweeted by the White House.

### **Interior's Position On KBE \$\$\$.**

The [Marshall Islands Journal](#) (1/26) reported that "during his visit to Majuro last week, Interior Assistant Secretary Doug Domenech declined to discuss specifics of Senator Lisa Murkowski's bill regarding the Bikini Resettlement Trust Fund because he had only seen a draft of the bill circulated last month." But in an interview with the Journal, "Domenech discussed the reasons behind Interior's decision to give the Bikini Council total authority over the trust fund." Domenech said, "Our sense was that after 30 years, they (the Bikinians) should be ready to manage the funds on their own. Our solicitors' office said the traditional practice of Interior approving the budget for the (KBE) Council was not rooted in law. We didn't have authority to do it."

### **Murkowski Angered By Decision.**

The [Marshall Islands Journal](#) (1/26) reported that Sen. Lisa Murkowski "followed through on her promise late last year to introduce legislation to mandate US Interior Department control over the Bikini Resettlement Trust Fund". A hearing on Senate Bill 2182 is set for next month in Washington, DC. The draft legislation "states that Interior would have the 'right of disapproval' over use of Bikini Resettlement Trust Fund money."

### **Feds 'Happy' With Progress Of CUC Projects.**

The [Marianas Variety](#) (2/2, Manabat) reports that "Bradley R. O'Brien, a lawyer for the U.S. Department of Justice-Environmental & Natural Resources Division-Environmental Enforcement Section, told the federal court on Monday that technical teams are happy with where things are regarding the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s Stipulated Order 2 projects." CUC legal counsel James Sirok "apprised the court with CUC's plans, and said that they would have a draft letter on Monday night and it would be presented to the court by Wednesday or Thursday morning." Sirok said "that CUC was 'pretty much in line with what was presented by the DOJ and EPA,' adding that the incinerator was a top priority."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Climate Change Diet: Arctic Sea Ice Thins, So Do Polar Bears.**

The [AP](#) (2/1, Borenstein) reports a study published in the journal Science has found "some polar bears in the Arctic are shedding pounds during the time they should be beefing up." It is "the climate change diet and scientists say it's not good." The scientists "blame global warming for the dwindling ice cover on the Arctic Ocean that bears need for hunting seals each spring."

[USA Today](#) (2/1, Osterath, Welle) reports the study also found that "polar bears now need

more food than in the past." Polar bears "require 1.6 times more energy than was estimated in the 1990s, researchers at the US Geological Survey, the Alaska Science Center in Anchorage, and at the University of California at Santa Cruz" said in the report. According to researchers "in total, the bears would have to eat one adult ringed seal or 19 newborn seal pups every 10 to 12 days to avoid starvation."

[National Geographic](#) (2/1, Leahy) and [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (2/1, Milman) also provide coverage of this story.

### **USGS: Sand Production Up 36 Percent In 2017; Wisconsin Tops In The Nation.**

The [La Crosse \(WI\) Tribune](#) (2/1, Hubbuch) reports that "domestic production of industrial sand increased more than 36 percent in 2017 as Wisconsin again led the nation, according to new numbers from the U.S. Geological Survey." According to the agency's 2017 Mineral Commodity report released Thursday, "total U.S. production was about 105 million metric tons, worth an estimated \$3.5 billion." The article notes "that's up from about 77 million tons the previous year but still below the peak in 2014."

### **Oklahoma Quakes Tied To How Deep Wastewater Is Injected.**

The [AP](#) (2/1, Borenstein) reports, that a study published on Thursday found "that a major trigger of man-made earthquakes rattling Oklahoma is how deep...fracking wastewater is injected into the ground." Researchers reviewed "more than 10,000 wastewater injection wells where 96 billion gallons of" fracking byproduct fluids are pumped each year. Stanford University geophysicist Matthew Weingarten, who did not participate in the study, said the probability of an earthquake increases "the closer you get to the faults."

[Axios](#) (2/1, O'Reilly) reports the study's researchers found that "restricting injection depths to 200–500 meters above the basement level could reduce earthquakes by a factor of 1.2–2.8."

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Rob Bishop: Changing The Dialogue On Public Lands From 'The Problem' To 'Our Problem'.**

In an op-ed for the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/1, Bishop), Rep. Rob Bishop supports Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "stance that the Interior would benefit from a significant shake-up that includes reallocating bureaus' decision-making authority to the respective areas of impact and streamlining cross-bureau coordination by consolidating mission support functions." Bishop notes that "under our current system, decision-makers lack regular interactions with the actual people who are affected by their decisions." Bishop writes that "in an era of high citizen distrust of government, putting federal decision-makers closer to constituents paves the way for improved two-way communication."

### **Drilled, Baby, Drilled.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/1) editorializes that the surge in American oil drilling over the past decade has resulted in greater energy security for the US, which has become much less reliant on foreign oil sources. The Journal credits a Congressional deal with former President Obama in 2015 to lift the oil export ban, quick industry adaptation to the 2016-2016 oil price plunge, and a natural gas fracking boom for improving America's energy security. The Journal stresses that the most important lesson is that the innovation of shale drillers and frackers, which created a great deal of wealth, never would have been possible if their actions had to be approved by the federal government.

### **Protecting Wilderness As An Act Of Democracy.**

In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (2/1, Tompkins), Kristine McDivitt Tompkins, president of Tompkins Conservation, asserts "that the transfer of private lands to the national park system is an act of democracy." Tompkins argues that "a country's natural masterpieces are best held and protected by the public for the common good." She writes that "national parks, monuments and other public lands remind us that regardless of race, economic standing or citizenship, we all depend on a healthy planet for our survival."

### **Trump's White House Quietly Undercut Environmental Harm Mitigation Rules.**

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (2/1, Super), David A. Super, a professor of law at Georgetown Law,

warns that the Interior Department is “taking environmental recklessness to a new level by abandoning efforts to limit how public lands would be exploited.” Super takes issue with an order signed by Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt which “rescinded four sets of policies designed to mitigate the damage that destructive activities cause on federal lands.” Super argues that “mitigation is precisely the kind of policy we should be seeking, in environmental matters and many others” because “it is a compromise.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *To Truly Make America Great Again, We Must Preserve Our Great National Monuments.* [Daily Caller](#) (2/2, Mathis).
- *Govs. Hogan, Cooper: Trump’s Offshore Drilling Plan Is A Terrible Idea. Here’s Why.* [Fox News](#) (2/2).
- *Rodents Of Unusual Size: Draining The DC Swamp.* [Federal News Radio \(DC\)](#) (2/1, Causey).
- *Do Your Part To Conserve Public Lands.* [Las Vegas Sun](#) (2/1, Baca).
- *Conservation Concerns Rise On Public Lands Under Trump.* [Green Bay \(WI\) Press-Gazette](#) (2/1, Durkin).
- *We Don’t Want It.* [San Luis Obispo \(CA\) New Times](#) (2/1, Carbajal).
- *Florida’s Congressional Lawmakers Right To Demand That Protected Federal Waters Remain Closed To Oil Drilling.* [Miami Herald](#) (2/1).
- *Commentary: New Oil And Gas Air Rules Leave Open Further Opportunities For Utah’s Air, Health And Economy.* [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/1, Handy).
- *A Moral Obligation To Help Tribes Restore Homelands.* [Nation Sun News](#) (2/1, Keel, Stevens).
- *Tribal Leadership Unified On Land Recovery, A Moral Obligation Of The United States.* [Indian Country](#) (2/1, Keel, Stevens).
- *Valles Caldera Management Model Should Not Be Emulated.* [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/2, Ribe).
- *Unpacking Yosemite’s Roads Will Be New Superintendent’s Most Important Job.* [Merced \(CA\) Sun-Star](#) (2/1).
- *Clammers, Wormers Can Coexist With Acadia’s Conservation Mission.* [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (2/1, Goldthwait).
- *The Extension Corner: Black Vultures Can Be A Buzzard Of A Problem.* [Stanly \(NC\) News Press](#) (2/1, Foster).
- *From Bears To Condors, The West’s Wildlife Is Finding Ways To Survive.* [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (2/1, Kapoor).
- *Trump’s Water Plan A Threat To Salmon And Clean Water.* [Eureka \(CA\) Times Standard](#) (2/1, Chichizola).
- *Legislature Must Control PFA’s Money Handling.* [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (2/2, Richards).

### **Top National News**

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#### **Trump Expected To Authorize Release Of Nunes Memo Today.**

News that President Trump is expected to authorize the release Friday of a memo on alleged FBI and Justice Department abuses, drafted by House Intelligence Committee staff at the behest of Chairman Devin Nunes, highlights the concerns about the move from the intelligence community – including fears that FBI Director Wray could resign in protest – as well as Democratic outrage.

On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/1, story 2, 3:30), David Muir reported that Trump’s “hand-picked FBI director, in a rare and public move, ask[ed] the White House not to release it,” but Trump “has now read it and is now expected to clear it for release.” ABC’s Jonathan Karl: “President Trump today ignored questions about that controversial Republican memo the FBI does not want released.” Trump is “squarely at odds” with Wray, “the man he hand-picked to lead the bureau after he fired James Comey. ... Today, one top Republican said the bureau’s warning should be heeded. Republican Sen. John Thune told reporters, ‘We need to pay careful attention to what our folks who protect us have to say about how this bears on national security.’” Lester Holt said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/1, story 4, 0:40), “The President has now read the memo, aides say, and one White House official tells NBC News that the White House is still reviewing possible redactions, but leaning toward not making any.”



On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/1, story 4, 2:20, Glor), Jeff Pegues reported, "The impending release of the memo touched raw nerves as the White House batted down rumors" that Wray "was going to quit in protest. Releasing the information, which is based on classified intelligence, is unusual. ... The four-page memo...outlines alleged surveillance abuses, and it has deepened a severe partisan divide. Democrat Adam Schiff says it presents a distorted and unfair picture of how the FBI behaved and jeopardizes the special counsel's Russia investigation." Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA): "They ought to be sending the message instead to the White House that were the President to fire Bob Mueller or Rod Rosenstein, that would be considered obstruction of justice, and it would bring down the Administration."

Jonathan Swan of [Axios](#) (2/1) reports, "Inside the Trump administration, sources who've been briefed on the Nunes memo expect it will be underwhelming and not the 'slam dunk' document it's been hyped up to be. ... There is much more skepticism inside the administration than has been previously reported about the value of releasing the memo, according to sources familiar" with the discussions. [CNN](#) (2/1, Bash, Zeleny, Perez) reports on its website that "top White House aides" are also worried that Wray could resign if the memo is released. Wray's stance "is 'raising hell,' one source familiar with the matter said."

The [AP](#) (2/1, Miller, Jalonick, Day) reports that the President "will clear the way for the publication" of the memo "over the strong objections of his own Justice Department. ... A White House official said Congress would probably be informed of the decision Friday, adding Trump was 'OK' with its release." [Reuters](#) (2/1, Strobel) reports that Democrats have called the memo "misleading, based on a selective use of highly classified data and intended to discredit" the work of Special Counsel Robert Mueller. [USA Today](#) (2/1, Johnson, Collins) writes that Trump "has for months railed against federal law enforcement and the intelligence community, blaming them for shadowing his year in office with a probe he frequently denounces as a 'witch hunt and a 'hoax.' But the standoff" over the memo "is striking in that the president of the United States appeared to unilaterally reject the advice of his own top officials, despite their separate warnings."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/1, Leonnig, Dawsey, Nakashima, Demirjian) reports that Trump "has told advisers that he believes the memo is 'gaining traction' and could help him convince the public" that Mueller's probe "is a witch hunt." [CNN](#) (2/1, Liptak, Collins, Murray, Merica) reports on its website that Trump "continues to tell his associates he believes the highly controversial Republican memo...could help discredit the Russia investigation." Philip Bump of the [Washington Post](#) (2/1) writes, "We already have had a number of reports about ways the president has attempted to redirect or end" the investigation, dating back to "shortly after he won the election."

The [New York Times](#) (2/1, Fandos, Goldman) reports that there has been "a growing chorus of warnings from national security officials who say that releasing the memo would jeopardize sensitive government information, including how intelligence is gathered, and from Democrats who say it is politically motivated and distorts the actions of the Justice Department and the F.B.I. by omitting crucial context." [USA Today](#) (2/1, Jackson, Johnson) reports that Administration officials said that Trump and his advisers "seriously considered the concerns of Wray and others, but believe release of the memo will not expose sources and methods of obtaining classified information."

Ashley Parker of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), "Just two weeks ago, Trump didn't even know what the Nunes memo was. But suddenly, he was arguing it should be made public." Philip Rucker of the Washington Post [tweeted](#) that Chief of Staff Kelly "and other White House staff were determined to follow a formal review process on Nunes memo, even though Trump's decision was all but cemented in advance."

House Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/1), "I've had the opportunity to review both the memo and the underlying documents as the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. I think it's important the American people have access to the information contained in this memo. I do believe that the President...should let the memo speak for itself. He should release it." Rep. Steve King (R-IA) said on [Fox News' Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (2/1), "If we saw this evidence and as the [Committee] has seen this evidence, if we turned our backs to that, if we turned a blind eye to that, shame on us if we trailed in the dust the integrity of this country."

However, Sen. Chris Coons said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/1) that he and Sen. Jeff Flake issued a statement Thursday "urging the President to change course, to not release this memo [Friday] because, as we state, we think it would undermine our intelligence gathering, it would further politicize Congress' oversight role, and it risks reducing confidence in key democratic institutions." Sen. Joe Manchin said on [CNN's Cuomo Prime Time](#) (2/1), "They're working in the House Intelligence [Committee] strictly on partisan, on a partisan participation."

Nunes has “neutered the confidence people could have in the House Intelligence Committee.”

Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX), asked on [CNN’s The Lead](#) (2/1) about the suggestion that Trump could be using the release of the memo to create a pretext to fire Mueller, said, “It’s quite possible, yes. The President seems to be taking different steps to protect himself. That seems to be his priority, and he’s got folks like [Nunes] who are helping him on that.”

Rep. Jim Himes (D-CT) said on [CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/1) that the memo “was not a product of an investigation. There is no investigation out of the Intelligence Committee. And again, very soon if this memo is made public, people that are implicated in it, and institutions that are implicated in it, will quickly rise to their defense, and the public will see what a shoddy second-rate hit this is.”

Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-CA) said on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (2/1) that the FBI has “a right to be gravely concerned. We’re in a First World democracy, and in democracies, you don’t go after the police when they are investigating you. You don’t sic the police on your political enemies. That’s exactly what the Trump Administration, and now with the help of House Republicans, are doing.”

Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA) [tweeted](#), “The memo itself matters far less than the @HouseGOP’s unprecedented politicization of national security. Trump wanted to override DOJ and the FBI without even having read it!” Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) [tweeted](#), “This week, I read the controversial memo authored by House Intel Chairman Nunes. While I cannot go into details about the contents, I can say that it was a highly-partisan document that compromises national security in order to protect President Trump.”

Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY) [tweeted](#), “@DevinNunes is putting our national security on the line to protect President Trump (despite FBI & DOJ objections). This is unpatriotic.” Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA) [tweeted](#), “The Nunes memo is misleading propaganda, trying to shield the President from scrutiny from his own justice department and mislead the American people. It’s simply an attack on the rule of law.” Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) [tweeted](#), “This is outrageous: @HouseGOP and @DevinNunes are ignoring FBI & DOJ warnings and endangering our national security to advance a conspiracy theory.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/1) editorializes, “So this is what a partisan witch hunt really looks like. In a demonstration of unbridled self-interest and bottomless bad faith, the Trump White House and its Republican minions in Congress” are set to release a memo “undermining the credibility of the law enforcement community that Republicans once defended so ardently. ... You could call it all a wild-eyed conspiracy theory, only there’s no real theory behind it. Instead, there’s a mad scramble to set off this latest smoke bomb.”

Eugene Robinson writes in his [Washington Post](#) (2/1) column, “Presidents don’t win fights with the FBI. Donald Trump apparently wants to learn this lesson the hard way.” The FBI “has no political ax to grind, and the attempt by Nunes and others to portray it as some kind of liberal cabal is comical.” Tim Weiner writes in his [New York Times](#) (2/1) column, “The bureau called the memo materially false and misleading in an extraordinary unsigned statement...and yet Mr. Trump has signaled his desire to see it made public, unredacted. He clearly sees the memo as a weapon of political warfare.”

Los Angeles Times columnist and Politico contributing editor Virginia Heffernan [tweeted](#), “Oh look Nunes & co found the OJ playbook: When guilt is plain as day, claim the justice system is corrupt & the crime scene is contaminated. Also dispatch clowns to the media to distract everyone from the blood blood blood on your client’s hands.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/1, House), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/1, Ballhaus, Hughes, Nicholas), the [Washington Times](#) (2/1, Boyer), [Politico](#) (2/1, Cheney), and [The Hill](#) (2/1, Fabian, Williams) also report on the expected release.

**Hannity Denies That He Has Been Advising Trump About Memo.** The [Daily Beast](#) (2/1) reports that “according to three sources with knowledge of their conversations,” Trump has been speaking regularly with Fox News’ Sean Hannity about the memo, and the “Trump ally has encouraged the prompt release” of the document. Trump and Hannity reportedly “discussed the Nunes memo’s supposed bombshell-level significance, and how it could shed light on the alleged anti-Trump bias and ‘corruption’ at the FBI.”

[The Hill](#) (2/1, Bowden) reports that Hannity denied the report, [tweeting](#), “A total lie, Fake news. Phony ‘anonymous sources’. Amazing how the left wing media just makes Sh&(): up.” Washington Post conservative blogger Jennifer Rubin [tweeted](#), “Imagine how dense you would need to be to want advice from Hannity.”

**Trump Jr. Says McCabe Was Fired Over Information In Memo.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/1, Morton) reports, “Donald Trump Jr. claimed Thursday that former FBI Deputy Director Andrew

McCabe was 'fired' because of information in the notorious classified Nunes memo." He [tweeted](#), "The FBI reaction to the memo is Indicative of a lot. All of congress has seen it, not just the special committees. Also weird that for the first time ever the media wants less info? What are they hiding?" He then [added](#), "It was good enough to fire McCabe, no one argues its factually inaccurate, but now days later they want to protect the names of those involved in a scandal that was big enough to fire a senior official a month before retirement? They don't deserve a pass on that!" The Washington Post's Greg Sargent [tweeted](#) in response, "McCabe was fired?"

***Ryan Rejects Calls From Pelosi And Schumer To Remove Nunes From Intelligence Chair.*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/1, Sherfinski) reports that House Speaker Ryan has "rejected Democratic calls to remove" Nunes from his chairmanship, "dismissing them as 'political games' meant to distract the public." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/1) reports that in a letter to Ryan, House Minority Leader Pelosi argued "that Nunes' insistence on making the memo public over the FBI and Justice Department's objections that it is inaccurate and contains classified information is putting the House of Representatives' integrity at stake," and [Politico](#) (2/1, Schor, Cheney) reports that Senate Minority Leader Schumer also said Nunes should be removed. The "pushback from the two Democratic leaders...appeared not to be coordinated."

In a front-page story, the [New York Times](#) (2/1, A1, Stolberg, Rosenberg) writes that Nunes "has made an unlikely transition from a leadership loyalist who once heaped scorn on Republican hard-liners to one of the hard-liners' idols." In 2013, he called conservatives who were pressing for a government shutdown "lemmings in suicide vests," but now, "to the president's most ardent supporters, Mr. Nunes is a hero."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/1) editorializes, "Ryan bears full responsibility for the deterioration of congressional oversight of intelligence operations. Once a bipartisan responsibility that lawmakers treated soberly – as they still do in the Senate – oversight under Mr. Nunes has become another front" in the President's "assault on the law enforcement institutions investigating the president and his associates."

***Paul Says FBI Should Not "Insert Itself Into Campaigns."*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/1, Persons) reports, "Sen. Rand Paul said Thursday the FBI needs more oversight and there needs to be some way to keep the agency out of elections." During an appearance on MSNBC, Paul said, "Maybe we need to be more careful and figure out a way the FBI doesn't insert itself into campaigns." [The Hill](#) (2/1, Beavers) reports that Paul "is calling on the FBI to release information related to the two FBI agents who sent messages disparaging President Trump."

***Comey: "Weasels And Liars Never Hold The Field."*** [The Hill](#) (2/1, Samuels) reports that Comey "expressed appreciation for the FBI standing up against 'weasels and liars' as debate rages" over the memo. Comey [tweeted](#), "All should appreciate the FBI speaking up. I wish more of our leaders would. But take heart: American history shows that, in the long run, weasels and liars never hold the field, so long as good people stand up. Not a lot of schools or streets named for Joe McCarthy."

***Monmouth Poll: 71%, Including Majority Of Republicans, Say Trump Should Meet With Mueller.*** [Politico](#) (2/1, Castillo) reports that "an overwhelming majority of Americans" think the President should agree to an interview with Mueller "and that the exchange should be under oath, according to a poll released on Thursday." The Monmouth University poll found that 71% – including 85% of Democrats, 74% of independents, and 51% of Republicans – "think the two should meet, with 82 percent saying the interview should be under oath."

***Hicks "Under Increasing Scrutiny" Over Reported Comments About Emails.*** [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/1, story 3, 2:30, Muir) reported on the "new questions about a member of the President's inner circle, Communications Director Hope Hicks. Did she play a role in the misleading statement about that Trump Tower meeting between Donald Trump Jr. and that Russian lawyer, among others?" ABC's Pierre Thomas: "Hicks is under increasing scrutiny. Did she try to help mislead the public about that infamous Trump Tower meeting? ... The spokesman for President Trump's legal team at the time, Mark Corallo, was concerned about the statement's misleading nature. Less than two weeks later, he resigned. A source close to Corallo describes a conference call with Corallo, President Trump, and Hope Hicks just one day after the misleading statement was released. On that call, Corallo alleges that Hicks said of those emails with Russians promising dirt on Hillary Clinton, 'Only few people have them. They will never get out.' And Corallo responded, 'This is Washington. Everything gets out.'"

***Three Gates Attorneys Step Down.*** [Bloomberg News](#) (2/1, Harris, Voreacos) reports that three attorneys "for Paul Manafort's co-defendant, Rick Gates, have told the court they want to quit in the criminal money-laundering conspiracy case, bolstering the idea that he may be cooperating" with Mueller's investigation.



**Counterintelligence Officials Were Aware Of Page For Years.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/1, Ballhaus, Tau) reports that US counterintelligence officials were aware of Carter Page for years before he became a foreign policy adviser to Trump's campaign. Page is prominently mentioned in the Trump-Russia dossier compiled for Fusion GPS.

Marcy Wheeler writes in [Politico Magazine](#) (2/1), "In part because of the way Democrats have handled the aftermath of the leak of the dossier, that very typical act of hiring an oppo research firm has turned into one of the biggest manufactured scandals of the Trump administration, one Republicans are trying to use to undermine" the investigation.

**Pompeo: Nothing "Untoward" About Meeting With Russian Spy Chiefs.** The [AP](#) (2/1, Riechmann) reports that CIA Director Pompeo "said Thursday there was nothing 'untoward' about his meeting with top Russian spy chiefs, saying that even though Moscow remains an adversary, ignoring chances to cooperate on security issues would endanger American lives." The [New York Times](#) (2/1, Rosenberg) reports that in a letter to Schumer, who had raised questions about the meeting, Pompeo wrote, "We periodically meet with our Russian intelligence counterparts for the same reason our predecessors did – to keep Americans safe." [Reuters](#) (2/1) also covers Pompeo's remarks.

### **Republicans Step Back From Effort To Repeal ACA.**

[Politico](#) (2/1, Everett) says Republicans "are giving up on their years-long dream of repealing" the Affordable Care Act. Many "doubt they can even pass a budget providing for the powerful party-line 'reconciliation' procedure used to pass tax reform last year, much less take on the politically perilous task of rewriting health care laws in an election year." Politico says Senate Majority Leader McConnell "has charted a bipartisan approach in his comments when asked about the matter."

### **Trump Pushes Democrats To Find Deal With Republicans On DACA.**

In a speech the [New York Times](#) (2/1, Kaplan, Baker) says "turned up pressure on Democrats" to reach an agreement with Republicans on protections for the so-called DREAMers, President Trump told Republican lawmakers at their annual retreat that while Democrats "talk a good game," they are more interested in politics than finding a solution. Trump said, "They talk a good game with DACA, but they don't produce." Trump "complained that Democrats were unwilling to budge and would rather see him fail than make progress on immigration or other issues that would benefit the country."

[Reuters](#) (2/1, Becker) reports that Trump urged Republicans "to put aside misgivings over letting young 'Dreamer' immigrants stay in the United States and pass a bill that includes that measure but also imposes tough new immigration curbs." Trump said, "To get it done, we'll all have to make some compromises along the way, to get it done this way. ... We have to be willing to give a little in order for our country to gain a whole lot." [USA Today](#) (2/1, Korte, Collins) says Trump told Republicans that if they do not compromise on the issue, they "need to elect more Republicans. That's another way of doing it."

[Breitbart](#) (2/1, Binder) reports that Trump told the group that ending "chain migration" and the diversity visa lottery program are the "center, mainstream view of the American people." [Politico](#) (2/1, Nelson) says Trump's remarks "contained little in the way of fresh proposals, focusing instead on reinforcing policies his administration has pushed for weeks or months." Trump also "objected to the use of the term 'Dreamers,'" telling Republicans not to "fall into that trap" and arguing that "we have Dreamers in this country, too."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/1, Debonis, Sullivan) reports that Trump's speech "comes as his party remains beset with divisions on the issue." Those divisions "were evident just hours before Trump issued his rallying cry," as Senate Republican Conference Chairman John Thune told reporters that a bill that addresses only DACA recipients and border security "may be the best we can hope for," while House Republican Conference Chairwoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, "appearing alongside Thune...embraced the cornerstones of the Trump plan." Meanwhile, House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows "said that conservatives remained opposed to any bill that provided dreamers with a 'special pathway' to citizenship – including one based on the Trump framework."

In a separate story, the [Washington Post](#) (2/1, Johnson) describes Trump's speech Thursday as "a Trump-ified version of the State of the Union speech." After "staying on script and acting presidential" for a few days, "Trump was back to being Trump." The speech followed an early morning [tweet](#) in which Trump wrote, "March 5th is rapidly approaching and the Democrats are doing nothing about DACA. They Resist, Blame, Complain and Obstruct – and do nothing."

Start pushing Nancy Pelosi and the Dems to work out a DACA fix, NOW!"

[The Hill](#) (2/1, Carter) reports that in a [tweet](#) Thursday night, Trump "slam[med] Democratic leaders for 'not calling' him about" a DACA fix. Trump wrote, "The Democrats just aren't calling about DACA. Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer have to get moving fast, or they'll disappoint you again. We have a great chance to make a deal or, blame the Dems! March 5th is coming up fast."

However, the [AP](#) (2/1, Fram, Colvin) says Trump's call in his State Of The Union address for a "down-the-middle compromise" on immigration "did nothing to move Republicans and Democrats closer to a deal, as Democrats accused the president of lacing his speech with racially charged remarks and Republicans dug in on their demands." The AP describes an emerging "protracted tug-of-war" which "left serious doubt whether the two parties could reach an election-year pact to protect hundreds of thousands of young immigrants from deportation, sharpen border security and take other steps to curb immigration." [Reuters](#) (2/1) reports that Sen. James Lankford said Thursday that he would urge the President to extend the March 5 deadline he set for repealing the DACA program. Lankford told reporters, "I would encourage him to do that, give us more space to finish it out. ... The problem is, Congress only seems to work on deadline."

***Gerson Blasts Trump's SOTU Rhetoric On Immigrants.*** In his column for the [Washington Post](#) (2/1), Michael Gerson is critical of Trump's tone regarding immigrants in the State Of The Union. While the address "aspired to political normalcy, and largely achieved it," Gerson argues, "even on his finest behavior," Trump "could not be gracious to immigrants. Their role in the address was largely to create an atmosphere of menace – variously killing children or running a truck into a bike path." His "Americans are dreamers, too," suggested that "young people facing deportation were living lives of privilege at the expense of American citizens."

***AP Analysis: DACA Is Not The First Time Administration Has Gone Directly To Supreme Court.***

In an analysis, [Reuters](#) (2/1, Chung) reports that when the Administration bypassed a California federal appeals court and took its effort to end the DACA program directly to the Supreme Court, Attorney General Sessions called it a "rare step." However, this "was not the first time the administration took the unusual route of circumventing liberal-leaning lower courts and heading straight to the conservative-majority Supreme Court for relief from legal setbacks." The AP cites other examples and says "some legal scholars" says the strategy "makes sense...for an administration that has seen so many of its key policy initiatives challenged aggressively by political opponents, who often file in courts where they are likely to find sympathetic judges."

***Teachers Protected Under DACA Prepare For Possibility Of Deportation.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/1, Green) reports that the "nearly 9,000 protected under" the DACA program are preparing for the possibility that the March 5 deadline will arrive without an agreement, opening the possibility that they could be deported. NEA president Lily Eskelsen Garcia said, "Every day, educators are being told to forget about the fact that at any given moment the rug will be pulled out of your lives and you may lose your job. ... To see them treated in this despicable way, to see them treated as pawns, is just not fair."

***Haitian President Says Trump Is Right About Foreign Aid Being Wasted.*** [Bloomberg News](#) (2/1, Fieser) reports that President Jovenel Moise of Haiti said that while he was "taken aback" by President Trump's "s---hole" nations comment, when Trump "says the US is wasting money sending aid to foreign countries," he may be correct. Moise said, "Right now in Haiti, the money of foreign taxpayers, your money, is being wasted. ... Every year we receive \$1.2 billion to \$1.4 billion in aid, or more. However, it's all consumed in a state of disorder that constitutes public international development aid."

### **Economy Projected To Grow 5.4% In First Quarter.**

[CNBC](#) (2/1, Cox) reports that US GDP "is expected to surge 5.4 percent to start 2018," according to the latest estimates from the Atlanta Fed. If the estimate proves to be accurate, "it would be the best quarter since the Great Recession ended in 2009." Additionally, "real consumer spending jumped from 3.1 percent to 4 percent amid a sharp savings drawdown, and private fixed-investment growth surged from 5.2 percent to 9.2 percent."

***S&P 500's Strong January Makes Strong Year More Likely.*** [Reuters](#) (2/1, Carew) reports that "the S&P 500's gain of almost 6 percent in the first month of 2018" suggests that similar results will follow throughout the rest of the year, according to the so-called January Barometer. There have only been nine deviations from the Barometer since 1950, "according to the Stock Traders Almanac whose founder, Yale Hirsch, devised the indicator in 1972." Additionally, "in all the years when the S&P 500 rose more than 5 percent in January, the year's return has never been negative," according to LPL Financial Senior Market Strategist Ryan Detrick.

***January Indicator Has Frequently Been Incorrect Recently.*** The [AP](#) (2/1, Jay) reports,

however, that “the January indicator has been ‘wrong’ eight times since 2000: either the market has finished the year higher after a poor start, or it’s ended lower after making gains in the first month.” Conversely, “between 1950 and 2000, January was only ‘incorrect’ seven times.” In 2017, “the S&P 500 gained 1.8 percent in January – not bad, but nothing special – only to rally as investors saw evidence the global economy was getting stronger.”

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

*“The Republican Plot Against The FBI.”* The [New York Times](#) (2/1) editorializes, “So this is what a partisan witch hunt really looks like. In a demonstration of unbridled self-interest and bottomless bad faith, the Trump White House and its Republican minions in Congress” are set to release a memo “undermining the credibility of the law enforcement community that Republicans once defended so ardently. ... You could call it all a wild-eyed conspiracy theory, only there’s no real theory behind it. Instead, there’s a mad scramble to set off this latest smoke bomb.”

*“Playing With Fire And Fury On North Korea.”* A [New York Times](#) (2/1) editorial warns the Administration against unilateral American military action in North Korea, arguing that “enforcing economic sanctions and blocking deadly technology from entering or leaving North Korea are necessary parts of any reasonable strategy. But so is diplomacy, including negotiations.” It argues that the US “has been at war continuously since the attacks of Sept. 11 and now has just over 240,000 active-duty and reserve troops in at least 172 countries and territories. Enough.”

### Washington Post.

*“Paul Ryan Is Tarnishing The House.”* The [Washington Post](#) (2/1) editorializes, “[House Speaker] Ryan bears full responsibility for the deterioration of congressional oversight of intelligence operations. Once a bipartisan responsibility that lawmakers treated soberly – as they still do in the Senate – oversight under [House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin] Nunes has become another front” in the President’s “assault on the law enforcement institutions investigating the president and his associates.”

*“Trump Says He Wants To Refill Guantanamo. Bad Idea.”* The [Washington Post](#) (2/1) editorializes that it was “disappointing” to hear President Trump “renew his commitment to Guantanamo” during his State of the Union address, after showing several signs during his first year in office that he had “absorbed the central lesson of Guantanamo’s history since early 2002: that holding and trying detainees there is far harder and more time-consuming than in the US federal court system.” The Post says reopening the prison would also be “repeating one of the most conspicuous errors of the war on terrorism” that happened under President George W. Bush, who, by sending prisoners to Guantanamo, incited international criticism, “handed a recruitment tool to al Qaeda, and failed to bring the authors of the 9/11 attacks to justice.” The Post argues that Congress should not authorize a return to detentions at Guantanamo.

*“Menendez Is Legally In The Clear. That’s Not Exactly Vindication.”* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/1) says that the Justice Department this week decided not to retry Sen. Bob Menendez on federal corruption charges, but that “doesn’t mean there aren’t still questions about his behavior and what should be expected from those who hold public office.” Menendez, was charged with using “the influence of his office to advance the interests of” longtime friend and donor, Salomon Melgen, “in exchange for flights, vacations and political favors, including campaign donations.” Seeking to aid Melgen, Menendez pressed “for a Medicaid reimbursement policy change, intervened in a contract dispute and helped to get visas.” Yet, “even if his actions didn’t violate any law, shouldn’t there be higher standards for public conduct?”

### Wall Street Journal.

*“Drilled, Baby, Drilled.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/1) editorializes that the surge in American oil drilling over the past decade has resulted in greater energy security for the US, which has become much less reliant on foreign oil sources. The Journal credits a Congressional deal with former President Obama in 2015 to lift the oil export ban, quick industry adaptation to the 2016-2016 oil price plunge, and a natural gas fracking boom for improving America’s energy security. The Journal stresses that the most important lesson is that the innovation of shale drillers and frackers, which created a great deal of wealth, never would have been possible if their actions had to be approved by the federal government.

*“Columbia Vs. United Auto Workers.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/1) editorializes that

Columbia University's decision this week to bring the United Auto Workers to federal court is worrying. Although universities have a legitimate concern that unions may disrupt education and research, universities can also exploit student workers, particularly by compensating them with in-kind payments that do not cover the cost of their tuition. The Journal writes that university administrators may unite in this effort as Yale, Harvard, and the University of Chicago engage in similar battles against unions, and that the now-Republican dominated National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) may reverse a 2016 decision that allowed Columbia teaching and research assistants to unionize.

*"The Bishops Of Xi Jinping."* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/1) writes that the Pope's move to defer to Beijing over the appointment of seven Catholic bishops is disappointing for Catholics inside China, because of President Xi Jinping's worsening record of respecting human rights and the freedom of religion. The Journal argues that if the Vatican is indeed trying to normalize relations between Rome and Beijing, this concession comes at too high of a price, as it could force the Vatican to break relations with Taiwan.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

#### *Wall Street Journal:*

[Tech Giants Power To New Heights](#)

[Charity Funds Take Off As Tax Law Reshapes Giving](#)

[White House: Trump Is Expected To Approve Release Of Classified Memo](#)

[Pope Francis To Bow To China With Concession On Bishops](#)

#### *New York Times:*

[Trump Clears The Way For Release Of Secret Republican Memo](#)

[As Strongmen Steamroll Their Opponents, US Is Silent](#)

[White House Wants Pentagon To Offer More Options On North Korea](#)

[With Memo, Devin Nunes, Once A Scourge Of The Hard Right, Becomes Its Hero](#)

[Protecting An Olympics Held In North Korea's Nuclear Shadow](#)

[In District Known For Failure, Will The State Finally Step In?](#)

["My Baby Almost Died": Formula Scandal Sends Shudders Through France](#)

#### *Washington Post:*

["Why Can't I Have My Life Back?"](#)

[Memo On FBI Nears Release](#)

[How "Fat Leonard" Took USS Blue Ridge Off Course](#)

[Consumer Watchdog Unit Stripped Of Power](#)

[Humane Society Votes To Keep Accused CEO](#)

[President Quickly Persuaded On Declassification](#)

#### *Financial Times:*

[HBO Joins Netflix In Shattering Subscription Records](#)

[Ethiopian Regime Struggles To Quell Growing Unrest](#)

#### *Washington Times:*

[Battle Over Nunes Memo Tests Congress' Ability To Oversee FBI](#)

[Pressure Mounts On Democrats As Trump, GOP Fulfill Promises](#)

[Pass The Dip: Fans' Outrage Chips Away At Super Bowl Expectations](#)

[North Korea Nuclear Fears Boost Demand For Survivalist Gear, Services](#)

[Red Cross Official Confident U.S. Will Remain Top Donor Under Trump](#)

#### *Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:*

**ABC:** California School Shooting; Republican Memo Standoff; Russia Probe; Flu Epidemic; Flu Epidemic-Expert Comment; Weather Forecast; USA Gymnastic Sex Abuse; Nashville Mayor Affair; Phone Charger Explosion; California Police Violence; Teen Murder Trial; Super Bowl News.

**CBS:** Flu Epidemic; Flu Epidemic-Expert Comment; California School Shooting; Republican Memo Standoff; USA Gymnastic Sex Abuse; NFL-New Technology; Tech Company Earnings; GOP Retreat Train Crash Investigation; Celebrities Disappearance Mystery; Famous Photo History;

United Air-Animal Policy; Longest Zipline; US Olympic Ski Athletes.

**NBC:** California School Shooting; USA Gymnastic Sex Abuse; Flu Epidemic; Republican Memo Standoff; Breast Cancer-Risks; Opioid Crisis; North, South Korea-Winter Olympics; Celebrities Disappearance Mystery; Target-New Delivery Service; United Air-Animal Policy; Phone Charger Explosion; Super Bowl News.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Flu Epidemic – 7 minutes, 50 seconds

Republican Memo Standoff – 6 minutes, 30 seconds

California School Shooting – 6 minutes

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Republican Memo Standoff; Trump-Immigration Policy; California School Shooting; China-Minivan Explosion.

**CBS:** Republican Memo Standoff; Trump-Immigration Policy; Arizona House Rep-Sex Allegation; Castro's Son-Suicide; California School Shooting; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Republican Memo Standoff; California School Shooting; China-Minivan Explosion.

**NPR:** Republican Memo Standoff; GOP Retreat Train Crash Investigation; USA Gymnastic Sex Abuse; California School Shooting; Wall Street News.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with North Korean defectors; takes a tour of the Customs and Border Protection National Targeting Center; participates in a Customs and Border Protection roundtable.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Participates in a phone call with President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan; delivers remarks at a Rick Saccone for Congress event; delivers remarks at America First Policies' "Tax Cuts to Put America First" event.

**US Senate:** 11:00 AM Senate convenes for pro forma session Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 4:30 PM House of Representatives convenes for pro forma session Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

**Other:** 8:00 AM RNC Winter Meeting continues – Republican National Committee Winter Meeting 2018, day three, including a vote to formalize the selection of Chicago Cubs co-owner Todd Ricketts as the RNC finance chairman, after he was approved by the RNC Executive Committee yesterday \* Ricketts replaces Steve Wynn, who resigned last week amid sexual harassment allegations, which he has denied Location: Washington Hilton, 1919 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.gop.com](http://www.gop.com) <https://twitter.com/GOP>

9:00 AM AG Sessions and DHS Secretary Nielsen at summit on DoJ efforts to combat human trafficking – Associate Attorney General Rachel Brand hosts summit to discuss Department of Justice efforts to combat human trafficking, with participants including Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen, and business and community leaders from around the country Location: Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov) <https://twitter.com/TheJusticeDept>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "And by the way, Donald, if you do release that memo, I'd like to see your tax returns, too."

**Stephen Colbert:** [Referring to President Trump's tweet about his State of the Union viewership] "Look, it doesn't matter how many people watched, but what does matter is that the President needs to lie about it, and then somehow get away with it. This is the new world we live in. So let me say, in advance, congratulations to President Trump on winning the Super Bowl!"

**Stephen Colbert:** "[Rep. Devin] Nunes wouldn't even let the FBI testify about the memo about



them, explaining his committee is 'not going to be briefed by the people that are under investigation by this committee.' Yes, they're under investigation. Explains this flyer I saw at the post office: 'Wanted by the FBI. The FBI! For conspiracy to stop a conspiracy.'"

**James Corden:** "This morning, President Trump bragged about his State of the Union address, tweeting, 'Thank you for all of the nice compliments and reviews on the State of the Union speech. 45.6 million people watched, the highest number in history.' Now here's the thing: What Trump tweeted isn't even remotely true. I know, shocking."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "I read that the government is spending \$24 million to replace two refrigerators on Air Force One. Until then, they're keeping perishables cold by putting them between Donald and Melania."

**Seth Meyers:** "According to CNN, FBI Director Christopher Wray has made it clear that he's frustrated that President Trump is not listening to his advice regarding a controversial memo claiming the FBI abused surveillance laws. You're surprised Trump didn't listen to advice?"

**Seth Meyers:** "President Trump today said that Sen. Orrin Hatch called him the greatest President in the history of our country. I guess Hatch is still mad at Abraham Lincoln for stealing his girlfriend in middle school."

**Seth Meyers:** [Referring to the Republican intelligence memo release] "Vice President Mike Pence told Politico, 'I've always believed in the public's right to know, and I stand by that principle.' Oh really, Mike Pence? You've always believed in the public's right to know? In that case, will you release Trump's tax returns? Okay. Wait. Will you release the White House visitor logs? No, no, no. I'll give you another one: Will you release all the Russia-related emails?"

**Conan O'Brien:** "President Trump has decided not to take part in the traditional presidential Super Bowl interview. Apparently, Trump is worried he might not pass the NFL's concussion protocol."

**Conan O'Brien:** "Speaking of Trump, it's come out that President Trump's Director of Communications, Hope Hicks, may have partially obstructed justice. Trump said he's furious with Hicks because he hired her to fully obstruct justice. You don't go halfway on these things."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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## DOI In The News

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### California Says It Will Ban Crude From Trump Offshore Drilling Plan.

[Reuters](#) (2/7, Bernstein) reports California announced that it "will block the transport of petroleum from new offshore oil rigs through its state," in what is described as "a move meant to hobble the Trump administration's effort to vastly expand drilling in US federal waters." On Wednesday, the California State Lands Commission sent a letter to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management that urged the withdrawal of the administration's proposal to expand offshore drilling. The letter stated, "It is certain that the state would not approve new pipelines or allow use of existing pipelines to transport oil from new leases onshore." California Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom (D), who chairs the State Lands Commission, said, "I am resolved that not a single drop from Trump's new oil plan ever makes landfall in California." In response, a spokesperson for Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, "Secretary Zinke looks forward to meeting with more Governors and other coastal representatives who want to discuss the draft program."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/7, Wolfgang) reports Lt. Gov Newsom's "harsh statement" risked igniting "a legal standoff between California and President Trump." The [Daily Caller](#) (2/7, White) reports California's move "could set it on a collision course with the Trump administration." California "has control over the first three miles west from the coast, and the federally owned Outer Continental Shelf includes waters up to three miles out from that line. California officials can therefore control pipelines, transportation of materials, terminals, and refineries built in coastal areas. The federal government could pull out the U.S. Constitution's supremacy clause to create a regulatory framework that would override California law."

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/7, Gutierrez) reports the California State Lands Commission letter comes in advance of a public hearing in Sacramento scheduled for Thursday during which the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will "take public comment on Trump's offshore drilling plans." Hundreds of protesters "are expected to flood the...meeting...with state lawmakers scheduling rallies outside the Capitol and environmental groups busing people from across the state to attend." The [AP](#) (2/8, Cooper) reports that "fishermen, environmentalists and other critics plan to protest at the California Capitol before a public hearing on federal government plans to expand offshore drilling."

The [AP](#) (2/8) reports the BOEM will also hold public hearings on the proposed offshore drilling plan in Concord, New Hampshire on March 5 and in August, Maine on March 7.

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/7, COOPER), [NPR](#) (2/8, Sommer), the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/7, Siciliano), the [Ventura County \(CA\) Star](#) (2/7, Vaughan), the [San Luis Obispo \(CA\) Tribune](#) (2/7, Vaughan), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (2/7, Francisco), and [KQED-FM San Francisco](#) San Francisco (2/7, Miller)..

**Coastal Senators Decry 'Dumb' Proposal, Plot Response.** [E&E Daily](#) (2/7, Lunney) reports Democratic senators from US coastal states "added their fierce opposition yesterday to the Interior Department's proposed plan to open up more than 90 percent of federal waters to oil and gas drilling." Eleven lawmakers, led by Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA), "took to the Senate floor

yesterday to decry potential offshore drilling in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.” The senators used a wide-ranging vocabulary to describe the proposal, including: “‘egregious,’ ‘dumb,’ ‘disastrous,’ ‘insane’ and ‘misguided.’” Cantwell was joined by Sens. Tom Carper (D-DE), Chris Coons (D-DE), Patty Murray (D-WA), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Angus King (I-ME) and Ed Markey (D-MA). Additional coverage was provided by [UPI](#) (2/7, Graeber).

***New Jersey Environmentalists Blast Trump Offshore Drill Plan.*** The [AP](#) (2/7, Parry) reports more than a dozen New Jersey environmental groups “held a rally in the driving rain Wednesday on the Asbury Park boulevard” protesting “President Donald Trump’s plan to open most of the nation’s coastline to drilling.” New Jersey Sierra Club director Jeff Tittel said, “What Trump did was target the oceans from one end of the country to the other. ... We are going to send a very clear message to the fossil fool in the White House: hands off our beaches.”

The [NJTV Trenton \(NJ\)](#) (2/7, Aron) reports that “the entire New Jersey congressional delegation has written to” to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to oppose the proposed offshore drilling plan. On Tuesday, New Jersey Sen. Bob Menendez registered his opposition on the Senate floor, while Rep. Chris Smith’s office warned of the potential risks of an offshore oil spill on New Jersey beaches, wildlife, businesses, and tourism. Although there is no known oil off the Jersey Shore, the “New Jersey Petroleum Council says there is a large natural gas deposit 100 miles out.” According to NJPC Executive Director Jim Benton: “We are advocates for increasing our energy supply. That’s what we do. We think offshore development plays a critical in our national energy security. It can be done safely and coexist with tourism and fishing.”

Also reporting is [WHYY-TV Philadelphia](#) Philadelphia (2/7, Gregory).

***Gov. Scott Confident Florida Protected From Oil Drilling.*** The [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (2/7, Danielson) Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) on Wednesday affirmed “his belief that the Trump administration will keep its word and exempt Florida from plans for offshore drilling.” Scott said, “As you know, I’ve opposed offshore drilling, and as soon as Secretary Zinke was confirmed, I met with him, I talked to him about that we didn’t want it off our coast, and then when they came out with their plan – this was right around Christmas – I immediately called and asked if we could meet, and he was gracious enough to come down, and the right thing happened. There’s not going to be offshore drilling. ... He’s a man of his word. He’s a Navy Seal and I believe they’re going to do exactly what they committed.”

***Pressure Mounting On Georgia Governor To Oppose Offshore Drilling Plan.*** In its Political Insider blog, the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (2/7, Bluestein) reports Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal (R) is facing mounting pressure “to oppose the Trump administration’s move to open nearly all of the nation’s coastal waters to offshore oil and gas drilling.” Earlier in the week, the City Council of Atlanta “voted to back a resolution...that would oppose seismic testing and oil and gas development off Georgia’s coasts.” At the same time, “a bipartisan group of state lawmakers...introduced resolutions this week raising concerns it could disrupt the state’s fishing and tourism industries.” Gov. Deal remains “the only governor of a coastal state who has yet to oppose or embrace the plan.”

## **Udall Testifies On Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks Conservation Act In Key Committee Hearing.**

[KRWG-FM](#) Las Cruces, NM (2/7) reports that Sen. Tom Udall on Wednesday testified before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee in “support of his legislation to establish wilderness within the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks (OMDP) National Monument.” The Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks Conservation Act, S. 441, which is also cosponsored by Sen. Martin Heinrich, “provides permanent protection for some of Southern New Mexico’s most iconic landscapes, strengthens border security, respects military needs and historic grazing and safeguards OMDP’s sensitive cultural, historical, and natural treasures for generations to come.” Udall said, “Wilderness designation will enhance recreational opportunities in these pristine areas for hiking – as well as preserve traditional hunting and grazing uses and protect sensitive archaeological sites from destruction. National monument status brings important economic benefits as well. And Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks is no exception. From 2015 to 2016, visitors to the monument more than doubled. Increased tourism means increased spending at local restaurants, hotels, outdoor businesses, and arts and crafts shops, leading to an increase in our tax base.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/8, Coleman).

## **Trump And Zinke Open Millions Of Acres Of California Desert To Mining.**

The [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (2/7, Roth) reports that the Interior Department “said this

week it would allow mining on 1.3 million acres, or more than 2,000 square miles, across the California desert, reversing an Obama-era effort to protect those lands." The move "follows the Trump administration's announcement last week that it would reconsider an Obama-era plan to protect millions of acres of public land in the California desert." The Interior Department "said it hopes to allow more solar and wind farms, off-road vehicle driving, mining and grazing on those lands, which are home to desert tortoises, bighorn sheep, Joshua trees and other iconic species."

### **Bears Ears Is Open For Mining, But No One Bothered To Show Up.**

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/7, Deaux) reports that "a controversial decision weeks earlier by President Donald Trump had shrunk the size of two national monuments – known as Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante – by hundreds of thousands of acres, enraging environmentalists and American Indian groups who feared a stampede of mine and oil wildcatters would rush in and destroy the area's sandstone vistas, historic rock carvings and artifacts." But so far, the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining "says it hasn't received a single permit application for plots in the areas." Although "that may not ease the angst in the activist community any," the article says that "it does highlight a couple of key elements to the dispute: While the remote region contains several minerals as well as oil and gas, the logistics of moving material in and out are tricky, and the only resource that has the real potential of luring explorers is uranium."

### **After Court Wins, Bundy Camp Launches Legal Offensive Over Public Lands, Oregon Standoff.**

The [Washington Times](#) (2/7, Richardson) reports that Cliven Bundy and his associates have "launched a legal offensive against federal and state authorities, filing three civil lawsuits in the last two weeks challenging public-lands policy in Nevada and alleging official misconduct in the 2016 Oregon standoff." According to the Times, Cliven Bundy "wants to resolve his longstanding dispute over grazing rights with the federal government once and for all." The Times also reports that Jeanette Finicum "filed Jan. 25 a wrongful-death lawsuit over the killing of her husband, Robert 'LaVoy' Finicum, a Bundy ally who was shot three times in the back in January 2016 by Oregon state police at an FBI roadblock during the Malheur standoff." The Times says Finicum's case was "bolstered by...the June indictment of FBI agent W. Joseph Astarita for lying about firing his weapon."

### **Patagonia Finds New Way To Challenge Trump, Aid Activists.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/7, Doyle) reports that Patagonia is "escalating its political and civic activism with a new program unveiled today that could continue to pit the famed outdoor clothing company against congressional Republicans and the Trump administration's Interior Department." Citing "this time of unprecedented threats," the firm has "set up an online platform called Patagonia Action Works that's billed as a way for people to find environmental nonprofits based on issues and locations." The platform "also provides links for grass-roots organizations to apply for funding."

### **Connelly: Ex-Interior Secretary – 'No Such Thing As Clean Coal'.**

The [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (2/8, Connelly) reports that former Interior Secretary Sally Jewell spoke Wednesday at City Club's Civic Cocktail and delivered a "wide-ranging critique of damage being done by the Trump administration." According to Jewell, "the Trump administration has brought fun-house distortion to managing America's public lands, from yanking the welcome mat at national parks to making it harder to develop clean energy sources." Jewell "initially followed a Cabinet tradition of withholding criticism of one's successor, but her silence was broken with the Trump decision to slash by 85 percent the size of newly created Bears Ears National Monument in Utah."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Federal Decision On Mashpee Tribe's Land Expected Soon.**

The [Cape Cod \(MA\) Times](#) (2/7, Stening) reports that the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe "could be just days away from learning the fate of land the federal government took into trust on its behalf and a casino it wants to build on some of that property." The Interior Department is "set to decide whether the tribe's sovereign land, consisting of 170 acres in Mashpee and 151 acres in East Taunton, can remain in trust after a U.S District Court judge in 2016 adhered to a 2009

Supreme Court ruling in finding that the tribe failed to satisfy the legal definition of 'Indian' under the Indian Reorganization Act." However, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council Chairman Cedric Cromwell "said in a statement that there is no statutory requirement that the Interior Department issue a decision on a specific date."

### **Suspect Arrested In Double-Homicide On Nevada Reservation.**

The [AP](#) (2/7) reports that "a northern Nevada man has been arrested as a suspect in a double homicide on a tribal reservation along the Nevada-Oregon line." Humboldt County Sheriff Mike Allen "says Stoney Prior of McDermitt originally was taken into custody on unrelated tribal charges the day of the Jan. 31 killings at a home on the Fort McDermitt Reservation about 75 miles north of Winnemucca." According to Allen, "investigators for his office, the FBI and the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs subsequently developed probable cause and charged him with murder."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Feds Seek To Drop Charges Against Bundy Defendants.**

The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/7, Anglen) reports that federal prosecutors "want to drop charges against the four remaining defendants in the Bundy Ranch standoff case, including two militia members from Arizona." According to the Republic, "attorneys for the Nevada U.S. Attorney's Office filed a motion late Wednesday asking the court to dismiss the case against the men charged with taking up arms against federal agents to prevent a roundup of Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy's cattle in 2014." The Republic adds that "the dismissals represent an ignominious end to the case, which blew up last month when a judge declared a mistrial against the primary defendants in the case over what she described as egregious misconduct by prosecutors." US District Judge Gloria Navarro "said federal prosecutors acted recklessly and engaged in a 'deliberate attempt to mislead and distort the truth' by failing to turn over evidence that could have helped exonerate the four defendants."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Washington Times](#) (2/8, Richardson) and [KLAS-TV](#) Las Vegas (2/7, Bowers).

### **Garfield County Supports Roan-Area Drilling Plan.**

The [Glenwood Springs \(CO\) Post Independent](#) (2/7, Zorn) reports that the Garfield County Board of County Commissioners "signed a letter in support of Terra Energy's proposed plan for the Balzac Gulch Phase II project, while noting concerns about visual impacts." In 2015, the Bureau of Land Management "canceled 17 of the 19 natural gas leases on top of the Roan Plateau west of Rifle as part of a settlement negotiated between conservation groups and oil and gas leaseholders," but "numerous other leases at the base of the Roan were allowed to proceed under the deal, including ones now proposed for development by Terra Rocky Mountain." According to BLM spokesman David Boyd, "while the leases Terra currently proposes to develop as part of the Balzac Gulch Phase II Master Development Plan are among those included in that larger settlement, they are located below the rim and not on top of the Roan Plateau."

### **BLM Extends Comment Period On Southern Nevada Management Plan.**

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/7, Brean) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has "extended the public comment period on its effort revise its management blueprint for Southern Nevada." The deadline "to submit input on BLM's draft resource management plan for the area, which is being revised for the first time in 20 years" is now March 23. The comment period was originally set to expire on Feb. 2.

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Gov. Jerry Brown Scales Back Delta Tunnels Project.**

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/7, Kasler) reports that "the troubled Delta tunnels project was officially downsized Wednesday, as Gov. Jerry Brown's administration announced it would attempt to build a single tunnel in its effort to re-engineer California's elaborate water-delivery system." Failing "to secure enough money from California's water agencies for the original twin tunnels concept, the California Department of Water Resources said it would now try to build the project in phases: one tunnel now and a second tunnel years down the road." However, "the long-

awaited announcement doesn't appear to immediately solve the financial questions looming over the project, known officially as California WaterFix."

### **Water Forecast Is Bleak For Major Reservoir In Southwest US.**

The [AP](#) (2/7, Elliott) reports that Lake Powell will "likely collect less than half its normal amount of spring runoff this year because of a warm, dry winter across much of the region, forecasters said Wednesday." Lake Powell is "expected to get 47 percent of its average inflow because of scant snow in the mountains that feed the Colorado River, said Greg Smith, a hydrologist with the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration." Smith "said there is only a 10 percent chance that enough mountain snow will fall during the rest of the winter and spring to bring inflows back to average." The article notes that "it was the seventh-worst forecast for Lake Powell in 54 years."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Arizona Daily Star](#) (2/7, Davis).

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Rubio And Nelson Call For More Funding To Stop Grasshopper Sparrows From Vanishing.**

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/7, Staletovich) reports that Florida Sens. Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson are "sounding the alarm on Florida's nearly extinct grasshopper sparrows." In a letter to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Deputy Director Greg Sheehan this week, they "warned that with fewer than 100 birds left on the planet, the agency needs to ensure adequate funding for research." Nelson and Rubio wrote, "While we understand that all agencies face painful budget decisions, the funding needs in question make up less than one percent of the total Recovery Program funding for USFWS proposed by the Senate Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee for the current fiscal year."

### **House Approves Poliquin's Proposal For Swifter Exports Of Maine Seafood.**

The [Ripon Advance](#) (2/7) reports that the U.S. House of Representatives on Monday passed a bipartisan bill introduced by Rep. Bruce Poliquin "that aims to limit mandatory inspections and hasten exports of specific types of Maine seafood." The bill would "exempt exporters of sea urchins and sea cucumbers designated as food or taken for recreational purposes from licensing requirements, according to the bill's summary." The bill would also "require the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to amend regulations concerning transporting wildlife to clarify that sea urchins and sea cucumbers are fishery products exempt from the export permission requirements under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, according to the summary."

### **Endangered Fish Have Re-Emerged In The Santa Cruz River.**

[Cronkite News](#) (2/7, Mendoza) reports that "after a 70-year absence, the endangered Gila topminnow has re-emerged in the Santa Cruz River, a sign of health of a historically desiccated river basin." According to ecologists and environmentalists, "the cleaner water today can be attributed to upgrades in local water-treatment plants." Doug Duncan, a fish biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "said more than 1,000 fish can be found in the river today, but things were vastly different before the treatment plant upgrades."

## **National Park Service**

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### **NPS Official Requested Thousands In Upgrades For Park Housing Unit He Planned To Rent Out.**

[The Hill](#) (2/7, Green) reports that a National Park Service senior official requested the Interior Department "make \$32,000 worth of design and construction upgrades to an agency-owned housing unit in an attempt to profit from renting out the space as if it were his personal residence, according to an internal report." A DOI Office of Inspector General summary report released Wednesday "found that the unnamed NPS official, who served as liaison for two park partners, had 'created the appearance of using his public office for private gain' when he requested 'unnecessary' upgrades to a park housing unit." The IG "said that at the time that the report was created, on Jan. 8, the senior official had decided not to move into the unit and that NPS had delayed the renovations."



### **New Quarter Commemorates Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore.**

The [AP](#) (2/7) reports that a new quarter commemorates Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. The U.S. Mint and the National Park Service on Wednesday was set to hold an event to launch the "America the Beautiful Quarters Program" coin.

Also reporting are the [Detroit Free Press](#) (2/7, Gray) and [WBUP-TV Marquette \(MI\)](#) Marquette, MI (2/7, Lambert).

### **Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument Expansion Gains Support.**

The [Colorado Springs \(CO\) Gazette](#) (2/7, Ramstack) reports that Teller County commissioner Norm Steen "told Congress Tuesday that expanding the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument would help prevent wildfires and protect wildlife." Steen said in his testimony, "We received no public opposition to the idea and we unanimously agreed to support the expansion of the Fossil Beds Monument." The National Park Service would "manage the land, including trimming away underbrush that could provide fuel for fires, if Congress authorizes the transfer of ownership."

### **Sandy Springs Buying Land For Trail To Chattahoochee.**

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (2/7, Iбата) reports that Sandy Springs has "struck a deal with an apartment complex owner to buy a strip of land so the city can construct a trail connecting Crooked Creek Park to a National Park Service parcel along the Chattahoochee River." According to the article, "a pedestrian trail is planned to connect Crooked Creek Park, five acres owned by the city at River Exchange and Spalding drives, to the 40-acre Holcomb Bridge unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area."

### **New Exhibits, Free Admission At Morristown Washington's Headquarters.**

The [Morristown \(NJ\) Daily Record](#) (2/7, Westhoven) reports that Morristown National Historical Park will unveil a new \$2.2 Discover History Center on President's Day Weekend at Washington's Headquarters in Morristown. Park Superintendent Tom Ross "conducted a media preview of the center on Tuesday, demonstrating interactive exhibits that explained, through video, audio, games and other devices, a variety of subjects relevant to the Revolutionary War and multiple winter encampments of Gen. George Washington's Continental Army."

### **Joshua Tree National Park Sets Another Attendance Record In 2017.**

The [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (2/7, Barkas) reports that Joshua Tree National Park "set a new attendance record in 2017 with more than 2.8 million visitors – an increase of more than 338,000 over 2016 and the fourth consecutive record-setting year, officials said." Officials added that "they have also seen more people using the park during the week and at off-peak times to avoid long lines of vehicles at the entrance gates." Park Superintendent David Smith said, "We are pleased to see the number of visitors taking our suggestions by visiting during off-peak times, coming during the week and using the entrance at Cottonwood to avoid big weekend crowds."

### **Malibu Surfing Area Added To National Register Of Historic Places.**

The [Santa Monica \(CA\) Mirror](#) (2/7, Novack) reports that "Los Angeles' iconic Malibu surfing area" has been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The [Malibu \(CA\) Times](#) (2/7, Patel) reports that "Malibu Historic District includes popular destinations, including the Historic Malibu Pier, Surfrider Beach, Malibu Lagoon State Beach and surf breaks at First, Second and Third Points."

## **Office Of Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Interior Expands Role Of Assistant Insular Affairs Secretary.**

The [St. Thomas Source](#) (2/6) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "signed an order expanding the functions and responsibilities of Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Doug Domenech, adding responsibility for the Office of International Affairs and the Ocean, Great Lakes, and Coastal Program, the U.S. Department of the Interior reported Monday." Those responsibilities are "currently under the assistant secretary for policy management and budget." The new expanded portfolio will now be called the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs. Zinke said, "This realignment is part of the department's overall efforts to reorganize for the next 100 years and improve mission achievement. By elevating the profiles of all three of these components within Interior, we aim to renew and strengthen U.S. strategic

interests, strengthen relationships and policies for U.S. oceans, Great Lakes and coastal communities, and enhance collaboration globally on behalf of the American people.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [St. Croix Source](#) (2/6).

### **Lawmakers Scold Trump Official Over Pacific Island Trust Fund.**

[The Hill](#) (2/6, Wong) reports that “lawmakers on Tuesday scolded an Interior Department official over a decision to hand over a trust fund to former residents of the Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific.” Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski “said Congress had not been notified about the decision before the administration acted.” At a committee hearing, Murkowski told Doug Domenech, assistant secretary of insular areas at the Interior Department, “We learned about this letter and this reversal of decades-long practice by way of a press release – which is not a good way to work through the responsibilities that we have with Congress.” Domenech “apologized to Murkowski and the other lawmakers, saying the agency did not know the committee had an ‘interest in this particular issue.’” However, “the answer did little to assuage lawmakers.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Washington Post](#) (2/6, Grandoni), the [Anchorage \(AK\) Daily News](#) (2/5, Grandoni), the [Marianas Variety](#) (2/7, Grandoni), and [Courthouse News](#) (2/6, Eakin).

### **Bill Puts Rule On Islander Adoptees.**

The [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#) (2/6, Thompson) reports that “any adoption of a Marshallese parent’s child would require approval by the government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands under a bill state Rep. Jeff Williams, R-Springdale, hopes to introduce this month.” According to Eldon Alik, consulate general for the Marshall Islands, “passage of the bill would help the Marshallese government’s efforts to curb adoptions that take children out of the country and would protect the republic’s citizens living in the United States.” Alik said his government supports the legislation.

### **Delinking Tax Code Fails To Gain Support.**

The [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/6, Kerrigan) reports that the Guam Tax Commission has decided that “now is not the time to delink from federal tax code.” The issue of “delinking was raised in the wake of the tax reform passed by Congress in December, which now threatens the government of Guam with the loss of \$47.9 million in tax revenue this fiscal year and \$66.1 million next year.”

### **Former President Clinton Visits U.S. Virgin Islands.**

The [South Florida Caribbean News](#) (2/6) reports that former United States President Bill Clinton visited the U.S. Virgin Islands on Monday. Clinton supported Governor Kenneth E. Mapp’s “assertion that rebuilding with added resiliency is the right thing to do in the Territory.” Clinton “agreed that hardening the Territory’s infrastructure will save both tax dollars and lives.”

### **Shredded Roofs, Shattered Lives.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/6) reports the widespread destruction suffered by the US Virgin Islands after Hurricanes Irma and Maria battered the territory last year. The damage’s dampening effect on tourism has threatened the livelihoods of many Virgin Islanders. The Post suggests that the Islands’ entire middle class could be bankrupted by repair cost. The Post profiles several Virgin Islanders who face costs higher than \$100,000.

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Melting Permafrost Could Release Massive Amounts Of Dangerous Mercury, Study Says.**

The [Weather Channel](#) (2/7, Wright) reports that “melting permafrost is expected to release massive amounts of dangerous mercury into the environment in the coming years as climate change warms the planet, a new study says.” Scientists with the U.S. Geological Survey “discovered the world’s largest known store of mercury in the northern Arctic during a nearly 15-year study that entailed the drilling of 13 permafrost soil cores at various Alaskan sites.” Study co-author Kevin Schaefer of the National Snow and Ice Data Center at the University of Colorado said, “Prior to the start of the study, people assumed permafrost contained little to no mercury. But it turns out that not only is there mercury in permafrost, it’s also the biggest pool of mercury on the planet.”

Also reporting are the [Daily Mail](#) (2/7, Pettit) and [CBS News](#) (2/7, Specktor).

### **Magnitude 3.1 Earthquake Shakes North-central Oklahoma.**

The [AP](#) (2/7) reports that the US Geological Survey detected a "3.1 magnitude earthquake...at 10:12 a.m. about five miles south of Hennessey in Kingfisher County, about 45 miles (72 kilometers) northwest of Oklahoma City" at a depth of roughly four miles. Oklahoma earthquakes in recent years have been "linked to the underground injection of wastewater from oil and natural gas production."

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Trump Has Offered No Valid Reason For Revising California's Desert Plan.**

In an editorial, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/7) criticizes the move by the Trump Administration to reconsider the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. The paper urges Californians "to stand firm against this ploy to remove hard-fought protections and to endanger some of the state's defining landscapes." The editorial claims that "ultimately, this move has less to do with renewable energy development than with the Trump administration's desire to significantly reduce the amount of land set aside for conservation, and to undo every vestige of the Obama legacy that it can get its oil-stained hands on."

### **California Has Opposed Offshore Drilling For Decades, And For Good Reason.**

In an op-ed for the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/7, Laird), California secretary for natural resources John Laird opposes the Interior Department's offshore drilling plan. He notes that "no new offshore oil and gas leases have been allowed in California since a 1969 blowout off the coast of Santa Barbara fouled miles of shoreline; killed thousands of birds, fish and sea mammals; and devastated tourism and commercial fishing." Laird asserts that "California's opposition to offshore oil and gas development is neither partisan nor geographic; it is deeply ingrained across the state." In conclusion, he urges the Interior Department "to heed the will of Californians and withdraw our state from further consideration for renewed offshore oil and gas development."

### **Energy Dominance Takes A Toll On Public Lands, Public Input And Other Industries.**

The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/7) editorializes that the Trump Administration's "actions in the past year that prioritize the development of fossil fuels to achieve energy dominance are actions that ignore the reality of fossil-fuel-driven climate change that will benefit our economy in the short term while ignoring the long-term impacts." The paper adds that the actions also ignore "the public, who owns these lands." The editorial criticizes the Interior Department's move to scrap leasing plans, which "were created to bridge Washington and the West." It concludes that "scrapping them flies in the face of this administration's interest in 'giving local people back their say in public lands management.'"

### **Move Would Be Cosmetic.**

In an editorial, the [Eugene \(OR\) Register-Guard](#) (2/8) questions the idea of moving the Bureau of Land Management's headquarters to a Western site. The paper points out that "the BLM's employees are already concentrated in the West," while "only 400 employees are at the BLM's headquarters in Washington, D.C." Moreover, "the BLM would still need employees in the capital even if its headquarters" were in the West, since "Washington, D.C., is where top-level consultations with other agencies, ranging from the U.S. Forest Service to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, can occur." And "it's also where Congress sits, and its committees often call upon BLM leaders for testimony."

### **The Bureau Of Indian Education Is Broken.**

In commentary for [Education Week](#) (2/7, Juneau), Denise Juneau, the former state superintendent of public instruction in Montana, writes that while the Bureau of Indian Education "creates plan after plan intended to restructure, realign, reform, redesign, revise, and redo their education system, in actuality these plans are rarely carried out." She argues that "for over a century, the federal government has proven that attempting to control and oversee a nationwide network of schools leads to an ineffective and disheartening system of education that fails to address the cultural, linguistic, and overall learning needs of American Indian children." Juneau advises that "to truly move toward tribal educational sovereignty, the BIE needs to loosen its



grip, reduce the bureaucracy, and stop regulating from afar.”

### Additional Reading.

- *Thompson: The Public Land Sellout.* [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/7, Thompson).
- *Transmission Line Will Bring Multiple Benefits To Entire Region.* [Idaho Statesman](#) (2/7, Colburn).
- *CA Energy Project Brings Affordable Energy To Valley Farms.* [Fresno \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/7, Michael).
- *Arizona Lawmakers Are Trying To Decimate Your Groundwater (again).* [Arizona Republic](#) (2/7, Ferris).
- *Maybe It's Time For The Seminole Tribe To Make A Deal.* [Florida Politics](#) (2/7, Schorsch).

## Top National News

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### Liberals “Infuriated” Senate Budget Deal Excludes Protections For DREAMers.

Senate Majority Leader McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Schumer on Wednesday announced a bipartisan two-year budget deal that will increase spending on military and domestic programs but which increases the deficit and leaves the fate of so-called DREAMers unresolved. Media coverage of the agreement, which is extensive, focuses heavily on the opposition of liberal Democrats and immigration activists, describing them as “frustrated” and “infuriated” that protections for the DREAMers were left out of the bill. To a lesser extent, reporting highlights expected opposition from House conservatives, who take issue with the spending increases. While the White House voiced support for the plan, media reports, citing opposition from the left and the right, question whether the measure will have sufficient support to pass the House.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, Werner, Debonis) reports the agreement adds “billions of dollars in federal spending.” The deal would “lift statutory budget limits by more than \$200 billion and provide tens of billions of dollars in disaster relief funding.” The [New York Times](#) (2/7, Kaplan) says the deal would “effectively negate Mr. Trump’s demands to broadly reorder government with deep cuts to nondefense programs like environmental protection, foreign aid and health research that were to offset large increases in military spending.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/7, Mascaro) says that while the deal “promises to end the shutdown threats that have plagued Congress,” it “fails to address the unresolved issue of immigration and will add to a deficit already ballooning from the GOP tax cut plan.”

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/7) laments that to secure a much-needed funding increase for the military, Republicans had to agree to Democrats demands for large increases in discretionary spending. Similarly, a [Washington Post](#) (2/7) editorial says that while the deal would “do some good,” and Senate leaders “deserve credit for talking to one another and dealing in good faith,” it comes “at the cost of more debt, confirming yet again that the only time Washington’s leaders appear able to shake hands on big deals is when both sides agree to run up the national tab.”

To [Reuters](#) (2/7, Becker), the deal represents “a rare display of bipartisanship,” and [Politico](#) (2/7, Everett, Bresnahan) says it is “likely to pass easily” in the Senate, but “House approval will be a tougher lift.” The [AP](#) (2/7, Taylor) calls it “a bitter defeat for many liberal Democrats who sought to use the party’s leverage on the budget to resolve the plight of immigrant ‘Dreamers.’” [USA Today](#) (2/7, Singer) says the omission of protections for the DREAMers “has infuriated House Democrats.”

[Townhall](#) (2/7, O'Brien) calls it “surprising” that “Democrats agreed to a deal that does not include DACA,” and suggests they may have “learned something from the disastrous government shutdown a few weeks ago that did not sit well with the American people.” [Politico](#) (2/7, Schor, Caygle) describes “an internal Democratic rebellion” and says progressives “are frustrated that Senate Democrats cut a budget deal while relief for the young undocumented immigrants known as Dreamers remains in limbo.”

Under the headline, “Liberal Outrage As Dems Ignore ‘Dreamers’ In Budget Deal,” the [AP](#) (2/7, Peoples, Lugo) reports that “immigration activists joined liberal leaders Wednesday in threatening political retribution against congressional Democrats who ignore young immigrants in a massive spending deal.” [Breitbart](#) (2/7, Starr) reports that during an “anti-Trump Women’s March” in Washington Wednesday, “anti-semitic and pro-Palestinian activist Linda Sarsour,” a co-founder of the march, called Trump a white supremacist and warned Schumer, “I’m tired of white men negotiating on the backs of people of color and communities like ours. ... We are not bargaining chips. ... This is not a poker game.” At the rally, which was billed as “A Day of Action

Against Trump's White Supremacy," Sarsour and other speakers "expressed support for amnesty for not only the 800,000 illegal aliens protected from deportation under the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, but all of the estimated 11 million here illegally."

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/7, Litvan, Wasson, Kapur) reports that Rep. Luis Gutierrez said a deal is unacceptable without protections for the DREAMers. Gutierrez told reporters, "That would be a complete betrayal," adding that "a lot" of Democrats agree. Rep. Ted Lieu said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/7) that he will not vote for the Senate deal, arguing that "if they want my vote, then they need to negotiate with us and one of my reasonable requests is a fix to DACA so we don't deport 1.8 million people, and if they don't need my vote, they can pass it by themselves on their own votes."

Sen. Richard Blumenthal said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/7) that while the agreement represents "bipartisan progress," he is "still very concerned that it fails to address the protection of the DREAMers."

Sen. Dick Durbin was asked on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/7) about the chances that the DACA deadline will be extended. Durbin said, "The President said he won't extend it. In fact in testimony a member of his cabinet said he could not legally extend it. The President created this deadline. We're now five months into his six-month challenge and the Republican Congress has passed not one bill to address the President's challenge. If this March 5 comes around, we don't have an alternative to the President's shutdown of this program, 1,000 young people a day will lose their protected status under DACA. ... It's a harsh outcome because the President got into this without a proposal, a reasonable proposal to solve the problem he created."

[Breitbart](#) (2/7, Munro) says the plan "effectively blocks the Democrats' push to win a 2018 amnesty for so-called 'dreamer' illegals" because it "leaves the Senate Democrats without any budget leverage to force House Speaker Rep. Paul Ryan to schedule an amnesty debate on the House floor that would split the GOP caucus prior to the November election." The [Washington Times](#) (2/7, Dinan, Sherfinski) says that while the deal "does not include any immigration solutions," McConnell "has promised a robust debate beginning next week." That promise was "not good enough for immigrant-rights groups," who "said they'll try to push for another stoppage." House Minority Leader Pelosi "said she won't support the budget deal unless GOP leaders agree to a free-wheeling immigration debate in the House, similar to the one Mr. McConnell promised in the Senate."

Kasie Hunt reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/7, story 2, 0:55, Guthrie) that Pelosi delivered "a marathon eight-hour" floor speech "protesting [the] major bipartisan budget deal." The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, O'Keefe, Weigel, Kane) reports that Pelosi "peppered her speech with anecdotes about people protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and mentioned the biblical tale of the Good Samaritan."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/7, Wire) says Pelosi "described the children who were smuggled across the border in trash cans" and "spoke of students who gave graduation speeches but weren't able to get loans to follow their classmates to college." In addition, she "recounted the anxiety of Dreamers who lost their work permits after President Trump last year announced the end of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program," and "demanded" that Ryan "commit to a vote on fixing the legal status of Dreamers in exchange for her support for a two-year spending plan to keep the government open past Thursday night." The [New York Times](#) (2/7, Stolberg) says Pelosi "demonstrated, yet again, why" she "remains one of the most enduring – and to many, infuriating – figures in Washington."

**House Conservatives Expected To Oppose Agreement.** The deal also faces opposition from House conservatives. Nancy Cordes said in the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/7, lead story, 2:35, Glor) that Republican leaders "are facing a conservative uprising," and [Politico](#) (2/7, Bade, Everett, Ferris) says "fiscal hawks" slammed it "as fiscally irresponsible and an abrogation of the GOP's congressional majorities." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/7, Peterson, Hughes) reports that House conservatives oppose the bill's increased spending and the suspension of the debt limit.

In an interview before the deal was announced, House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows told [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/7), "I'm afraid that the deal that they're going to announce, Chuck Schumer will be very happy about that, the Freedom Caucus members won't later today because we're going to grow the size of government some 13 percent."

Rep. Mark Sanford said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/7) that "the likes of Mark Meadows or Jim Jordan and others will be pushing on this point of saying, wait a minute. We have a profound spending problem and if at the end of the day Republicans own the tab on the way it has increased, I think it is a political problem as well."

[Roll Call \(DC\)](#) (2/7, Williams) says that with conservatives “expected to reject the proposal...Democratic support will be necessary for it to advance.” [The Hill](#) (2/7, Bolton) says that with Ryan “likely to face defections from conservatives,” the “more Republican votes he loses, the more leverage Pelosi has.”

Carl Hulse writes in an analysis for the [New York Times](#) (2/7) that while McConnell and Schumer “could barely look at each other on the floor as Congress careened into a government shutdown” two weeks ago, they have “delivered a major budget deal containing eye-popping spending increases and clear political benefits for both sides.” While “some conservatives in the House and Senate will no doubt oppose it, and Democrats unhappy that immigration policy was left out,” the deal “was drawing broad support from other factions, including Republicans on the Armed Services Committees in the House and Senate, Mr. Ryan, the Pentagon and the White House.”

**Trump Praises Deal, Calls On Lawmakers To Support It.** Meanwhile, [The Hill](#) (2/7, Fabian) reports that the White House “cheered” the deal. Press Secretary Sarah Sanders told reporters, “We applaud the steps forward that they’ve made.” However, she “stopped short of saying President Trump would sign the agreement,” saying he would “need to see what’s in the final bill.” [Politico](#) (2/7, Lima) reports that Trump “praised” the deal in a tweet, [writing](#), “The Budget Agreement today is so important for our great Military,” the president tweeted. “It ends the dangerous sequester and gives [Defense] Secretary [Jim] Mattis what he needs to keep America Great. Republicans and Democrats must support our troops and support this Bill!”

On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/7, story 4, 3:05, Muir), Jonathan Karl pointed out that on Tuesday, Trump “emphatically called for a government shutdown if he didn’t get” money for the border wall, but “from the White House today, an apparent about-face. The President now endorsing the Senate deal that makes no promise whatsoever about the wall.”

Byron York said on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/7) that “there is no DACA in it. Donald Trump sees that as a victory and a lot of Democrats on the leftist base see that as a loss because they have given up leverage once more and by the way, it has a debt ceiling clause which is going to get the debt ceiling past November so nobody can use the debt ceiling for leverage. This is just a win for the White House.”

**Mattis Lauds Spending Deal.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/7, Miller) reports that Defense Secretary Mattis “heralded” the deal, “saying the military needs long-term funding to keep America safe.” Mattis “said the deal to raise spending caps would ensure the Pentagon’s ability to fill key positions with new recruits, maintain warships and modernize the military.” Speaking to reporters at the White House, Mattis said, “America can afford survival.”

**Thornberry: Military Is A “Political Football” In Budget Negotiations.** House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Mac Thornberry said on [Fox News’ Fox & Friends](#) (2/7), “Our situation now is nearly everybody agrees we need to do better by the military, but you have got some Republicans who say, I will vote for more military spending, if you cut other spending because I’m worried about the deficit. You have Democrats who say, I will support the military if you increase other spending. So the military is in the middle as a political football, and meanwhile we are unfortunately losing more and more service members in training accidents because planes can’t fly, ships can’t sail. They’re not getting training they need. It has got to stop.”

### **Trump Calls Newly Released FBI Text Messages “Bombshells.”**

Senate Homeland Security Chairman Ron Johnson released [384 pages](#) of text messages between FBI lawyer Lisa Page and senior FBI agent Peter Strzok on Wednesday morning, leading President Trump to [tweet](#), “NEW FBI TEXTS ARE BOMBHELLS!” The President did not elaborate, nor return to the subject in subsequent tweets.

The [New York Post](#) (2/7, Moore) reports, “The messages between FBI lawyer Lisa Page and her lover and bureau colleague Peter Strzok were released early Wednesday by the Senate Homeland Security Committee, which provides oversight of the bureau.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, Zapotosky, Demirjian) reports, “Though many of the messages already had been made public, President Trump quickly seized on their release, writing on Twitter, ‘NEW FBI TEXTS ARE BOMBHELLS!’” The Post says the texts “show the two officials disliked Trump and feared what he might do as president,” but that they “also seemed to harbor animosity for many other politicians, including Democrats, and even co-workers.” [Politico](#) (2/7, Lima) headlines its report “Trump, Without Elaborating, Calls FBI Texts ‘Bombshells!’”

**Page Texted That Obama “Wants To Know Everything We Are Doing.”** [USA Today](#) (2/7, Johnson) reports that the messages “suggest that President Obama was tracking developments in the bureau’s inquiry into Hillary Clinton’s use of a private email server while she was secretary of

State.” Page wrote to Strzok, “POTUS wants to know everything we are doing.” It is “not clear how Page knew of Obama’s purported interest or what, if any, information on the case was shared” with him. Obama’s office offered “no immediate response.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/7, Mordock) reports that “the new batch of texts now raise questions about Mr. Obama’s involvement in the Clinton investigation.”

However, [The Hill](#) (2/7, Fabian) reports that those texts “were sent three days before Obama was scheduled to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the G-20 summit in China, meaning that the messages could have been about the Russia investigation and not the Clinton probe.” Rebecca Ballhaus of the Wall Street Journal [tweeted](#), “Those texts Trump called ‘BOMBHELLS’ earlier today showed FBI employees prepping to brief Obama about Russia’s interference in the 2016 election – not, as Sen. Johnson suggested, Obama meddling in the Clinton investigation.”

[Breitbart](#) (2/7, Boyle) reports that Republican National Committee spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany told Breitbart News Daily, “Every day it becomes more and more troubling and more people from the Obama era get tied up into this. Today is our first indication that perhaps President Obama himself was involved in this.” National Journal’s Josh Kraushaar [tweeted](#), “I don’t think this is any kind of bombshell but would love to see more reporting on Obama’s role during this time period.”

**Page, Strzok Traded Texts Praising Comey.** The [AP](#) (2/7, Tucker) reports that on the day in July 2016 that then-FBI Director James Comey “defended to Congress the bureau’s decision” in the Clinton email probe, Page and Strzok “traded admiring texts about his verbal dexterity – and mocking jibes at the lawmakers questioning him.” Strzok wrote of Comey, “God he is SO good.” Page responded, “I know. Brilliant public speaker. And brilliant distillation of fact.”

**Grassley-Graham Criminal Referral: FBI Relied “Heavily” On Dossier For Page FISA Warrant.** [The Hill](#) (2/7, Easley) reports that a January criminal referral to the Justice Department authored by Senate Judiciary Chairman Charles Grassley and Sen. Lindsey Graham states that “the FBI relied ‘heavily’ on a controversial dossier compiled by former British intelligence officer Christopher Steele to obtain a warrant to spy on” Trump campaign adviser Carter Page. The referral “was released late Tuesday night with redactions.” The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (2/7, Crabtree) reports that the referral says that the FBI presented Steele “as a credible source” even after suspending its own relationship with him.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal was asked on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (2/7) about the criminal referral. Blumenthal said, “I am deeply disappointed that this first action of criminal referral is one done without any consultation, let alone corroboration, with Democratic members. It smacks of a political action, not a serious legal one. And remember, very importantly here: Christopher Steele went to the FBI voluntarily because he was so alarmed by the prospect of collusion between the Russians and the Trump campaign. Contrast that conduct with Donald Trump Jr., who was told that the Russians had dirt on Hillary Clinton from hacked, stolen emails. What was his reaction? ‘I love it.’”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/7) says in an editorial that the referral makes text from the FBI’s Page FISA warrant application public for the first time, rebutting a Democratic claim that the FBI told the FISA court about the partisan nature of the dossier Steele compiled. The Journal says that it also indicates that Steele received at least some information from the State Department, which raises further questions. Mollie Hemingway of [The Federalist](#) (2/7) argues that the referral “reveals a host of problems arising from the bureau’s cooperation” with Steele, “who was working on behalf of Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/7, Scarborough) also reports on the criminal referral.

**Nunes Says He Has Considered Approaching Chief Justice To Testify.** [The Hill](#) (2/7, Williams) reports that House Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes “has weighed whether it would be possible to bring Chief Justice John Roberts to ‘testify’ before Congress as part of his investigation into political malfeasance” at the DOJ. He told radio host Hugh Hewitt, “This is something that we have, like I said, we have thought a lot about this. And the answer is we don’t know the correct way to proceed because of the separation of powers issue.”

**Poll: GOP Voters Increasingly Skeptical Of Russia Probe.** [Politico](#) (2/7, Shepard) reported that a pair of Politico/Morning Consult polls of just under 2,000 voters, taken separately on Feb. 1-4 and Feb. 3-4, shows that GOP “voters are skeptical of the investigation into Russia’s intervention in the 2016 election and any connection to President Donald Trump’s campaign.” However, “the House GOP memo Trump says ‘totally vindicates’ him hasn’t been the game-changer for which the president and his allies may have been hoping,” as about 30 percent of those surveyed “say they think the contents of the memo...are ‘mostly true,’ and 22 percent think the contents are

mostly false. Nearly half, 48 percent, don't know or have no opinion." Meanwhile, Morning Consult's Kyle Dropp is quoted as saying, "Republican skepticism has grown around the Russia probe and special counsel Robert Mueller. Only 22 percent of Republicans have a favorable opinion of Robert Mueller, and just 25 percent say the investigation has been handled fairly."

**Whitehouse: FBI, DOJ Are "Targets Of Dirty Tricks."** In a [Washington Post](#) (2/7) op-ed, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse writes that as "recent actions" by Trump and Nunes "underscore, there is a concerted effort to undermine" Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation. The FBI and DOJ "have become targets of dirty tricks. The unfair charges are gutter politics: trashing American institutions to protect a president from the due course of the law."

**Schiff: Bannon And Lewandowski Refusing To Appear Before House Intelligence Committee.** [Politico](#) (2/7, Cheney) reports that House Intelligence Committee ranking member Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA) said Wednesday that Steve Bannon "is refusing to testify about his time on the post-election transition team" and in the White House, and that former Trump campaign manager Corey Lewandowski "also indicated through an attorney that he won't make a second appearance before the committee." Schiff said, "Neither Bannon nor Lewandowski have articulated legitimate grounds for refusing to appear and answer questions before Congress, and we fully expect them to return."

**Gates Attorneys Ask To Leave Case.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/6, Hsu) reports that attorneys for Paul Manafort's co-defendant, Rick Gates, have asked US District Judge Amy Berman Jackson to leave the case, but she did not immediately rule on their request. The exit of attorneys Walter Mack, Annemarie McAvoy, and Shanlon Wu could leave Gates "with his third set of defense lawyers" since he and Manafort were indicted in late October.

**Papadopoulos' Fiance Says "Coffee Boy" Gibe Led Her To Speak Out.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, Rosenberg) interviews Simona Mangiante, the fiancée of former Trump campaign adviser George Papadopoulos, writing that she decided to speak out after a Trump campaign adviser "said on television that Papadopoulos was nothing more than 'the coffee boy.'" Mangiante said, "I don't represent George. I always talk on my behalf. ... The intention is to deliver a more realistic picture of who George is, which has been distorted in media before."

**Travel Ban Defender Boente Signed Page FISA Warrant Application.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, Zapotosky) profiles "veteran federal prosecutor" Dana Boente, who one year ago "stepped in to defend President Trump's travel ban after the acting attorney general was fired over her refusal to do so," seeming "to earn Trump's gratitude." Last week it was revealed that Boente "had signed [the] secret court application to surveil" Page.

**DOJ Official With Role In Both Clinton And Russia Probes Steps Down.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, Nakashima) reports that David Laufman, who helped oversee both the Clinton email probe and the Russian interference investigation, stepped down as head of the Justice Department National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section this week, citing "personal reasons."

**Publication Of Comey Memoir Pushed Up To April 17.** The [AP](#) (2/7) reports in a brief item that Flatiron Books said Wednesday that is moving up publication of Comey's memoir "A Higher Loyalty" from May 1 to April 17, "noting that the FBI is 'under intense scrutiny.'"

**Official Says Russia Successfully Compromised Several States' Voting Registration Systems.** On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/7, story 4, 3:30, Guthrie), Cynthia McFadden reported that a "senior intelligence official...says several states had their voting registration systems successfully compromised by the Russian government. This after US officials had previously revealed 21 states were targeted." Former DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson: "We were able to determine the scanning and probing of voter registration databases was coming from the Russian government." Johnson said he worries it will happen again because "a lot of states have done little to nothing to actually harden their cyber security." McFadden added that with nine months until midterm elections, "DHS is offering cyber security help, but some states tell us they're still waiting."

**Tillerson Warns About Russian Interference In Midterms.** [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/7, story 6, 0:15, Muir) reported in a 15-second brief that Secretary of State Tillerson is "warning that Russia is already trying to influence the midterm elections, and that the US is ill equipped to stop them. In an interview, Tillerson saying the US must continue to make it clear that if they do not stop, they will 'invite consequences.'" [USA Today](#) (2/7, Stanglin) reports, "Without elaborating, Tillerson raised the alarm about new Russian meddling" in the Fox News interview. Tillerson said, "If it's their intention to interfere, they are going to find ways to do that. We can take steps, but this is something that, once they decide they are going to do it, it's very difficult to pre-empt it."

**78% Of Russians See US Interference In Their Politics; 69% Of Americans See Russian**



**Interference Here.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, Taylor) reports that while “a majority of Americans believe the Russian government tries to influence domestic US politics...an even larger majority of Russians believe that Washington is trying to influence their politics. Seventy-eight percent of Russians polled said the United States meddles ‘a great deal’ or ‘a fair amount’ in Russian politics,” compared to 69% of Americans who say the same about Russian interference. The data come from the Chicago Council of Global Affairs and Russia’s Levada Center.

### **Federal Budget Deficit Hit \$174 Billion For First Four Months Of Fiscal Year.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/7, Lawler) reports that the Congressional Budget Office said Wednesday that the federal deficit “hit \$174 billion for the first four months” of Fiscal Year 2018, “up \$16 billion from the same period a year ago. The deficit grew because spending grew 5 percent, while revenues increased 4 percent.”

### **Pruitt: Warming Climate Not “Necessarily A Bad Thing.”**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/7, Grandoni, Dennis, Mooney) reports that during a Tuesday interview with a Las Vegas television station, EPA Administrator Pruitt, who “has repeatedly questioned the scientific consensus that rising levels of carbon dioxide from human-fueled activity are warming the planet,” argued that “even if climate change is occurring...a warmer atmosphere might not be so awful for humans.” Pruitt said, “We know humans have most flourished during times of what, warming trends. So I think there’s assumptions made that because the climate is warming, that that necessarily is a bad thing.”

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

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### **New York Times.**

**“Trump Wants A Big Parade. It Would Be A Big Mistake.”** A [New York Times](#) (2/7) editorial says the US “has the world’s most capable fighting force. But do we really want to spike the ball at a time when the country is embroiled in two wars, with no end in sight? The president seems to think so.” The Times argues that “what Americans and the world need from Mr. Trump is not martial pageantry, but a demonstration that he understands that national strength relies on much more than military power.”

**“Trump’s Backward View Of Immigration.”** A [New York Times](#) (2/7) editorial says Congress “now appears likely to reach a budget deal to keep the government functioning without treating” Dreamers “as bargaining chips.” It also appears, though, that President Trump will “consider undoing his threat of deportation for these young ‘Dreamers’ only if Congress considers the first deep cuts to legal immigration since the 1920s.” The Times says the changes the President is demanding “stem from a nativist, zero-sum view that what’s good for immigrants is bad for America. That view runs counter not just to the best of American tradition and principles, but to evidence of what’s best for the country.”

**“Baquer Namazi Shouldn’t Have To Die In An Iranian Prison.”** A [New York Times](#) (2/7) editorial says the detentions of Americans in Iran “have worsened tensions,” and argues that granting Banquer Namazi “a short-term medical leave and then extending it seemed like one possible way to break the logjam.” President Trump and his State Department, it says, “should continue trying to engage Iran. It’s not in the interest of either country for Mr. Namazi, or any other political prisoner, to die in jail.”

### **Washington Post.**

**“McConnell And Schumer Celebrate A Budget Deal That Denies Reality.”** A [Washington Post](#) (2/7) editorial says that while the spending agreement announced by Senate leaders would “do some good,” and the lawmakers “deserve credit for talking to one another and dealing in good faith,” it comes “at the cost of more debt, confirming yet again that the only time Washington’s leaders appear able to shake hands on big deals is when both sides agree to run up the national tab.”

**“Merkel Has Her Government But What Happens Next Is Crucial.”** The [Washington Post](#) (2/7) editorializes that the agreement reached between Germany’s two big centrist parties “is both good news and grounds for worry.” Although the coalition would help the continuation of Merkel’s defense of liberal values “in the age of President Trump” and make Germany “more amenable to proposals for strengthening EU institutions and the euro,” the weakening of the two parties that forced them into the deal “underlines the growing strength of the political extremes and raises

the specter that in Germany, as in other Western nations, the center ultimately may not hold.” Germany’s far-right party, Alternative for Germany (AfD), is opposing the deal, and even if voters approve the coalition, AfD “could be the leading beneficiary” if the coalition falters.

*“An Open-Government Official Was Denied Reappointment. DC Should Say Why.”* The [Washington Post](#) (2/7) editorializes that the DC Board of Ethics and Government Accountability’s decision “not to reappoint Traci L. Hughes as director of the Office of Open Government” is questionable. The Post opines that Mayor Muriel Bowser “should show her commitment to open government by calling on the independent ethics board to” explain the reasons for the decision to the public. The publication asserts that the board “should live up to its title and provide the public with” those reasons. Finally, the Post asserts that “Ms. Hughes should waive any confidentiality protections that might bar public discussion of her situation.”

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*“More Doubts About Mr. Steele.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/7) says in an editorial that the a January criminal referral to the Justice Department authored by Senate Judiciary Chairman Charles Grassley and Sen. Lindsey Graham makes text from the FBI’s Carter Page FISA warrant application public for the first time, rebutting a Democratic claim that the FBI told the FISA court about the partisan nature of the dossier Christopher Steele compiled. The Journal says that it also indicates that Steele received at least some information from the State Department, which raises further questions.

*“The Guns And Butter Budget.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/7) laments that to secure a much-needed funding increase for the military, Republicans had to agree to Democrats demands for large increases in discretionary spending.

*“Trump’s Moment Of British Truth.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/7) editorializes that President Trump’s criticism of Britain’s National Health Service was warranted because of its annual winter crises. The Journal also criticizes the NHS for allowing lengthy emergency-room waiting times, as well as breast and prostate cancer five-year survival rates that are inferior to the rates in the US. The Journal concludes that British healthcare needs reformation as the UK population continues to age and the life spans of its citizens lengthen.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### ***Wall Street Journal:***

[Congressional Leaders Reach Budget Deal](#)

[A Warning Sign Behind The Market Swings](#)

[Vice Just Had A Big Revenue Miss, And Investors Are Getting Antsy](#)

[How YouTube Drives People To The Internet’s Darkest Corners](#)

#### ***New York Times:***

[Senate Leaders Reach Deal To Raise Spending Over Two Years](#)

[Angela Merkel Strikes New Deal With Old Partners, At A High Cost](#)

[At 11th Hour, Status Of Russian Olympians Remains Uncertain](#)

[Rob Porter, White House Aide, Resigns After Accusations Of Abuse](#)

#### ***Washington Post:***

[How Mattis Succeeds In Turbulent White House](#)

[Trump Aide To Exit After Ex-Wives Allege Abuse](#)

[Decoding The Redwoods](#)

[Congress Set For Vote On Budget To Avert A Shutdown](#)

[Pelosi Makes Marathon Plea To Help ‘Dreamers’](#)

#### ***Financial Times:***

[Zuma’s Exit Appears Closer As He Meets Rival](#)

[Germany’s Parties Reach Grand Coalition Deal](#)

[North Korean Leader’s Sister To Attend Winter Olympics Opening](#)

[SpaceX Success Lifts Pentagon Hopes Of Ending Launch Pad Monopoly](#)

### ***Washington Times:***

[Newly Released Texts Raise Questions About Obama's Role In Clinton Probe](#)  
[FBI Put Misplaced Trust In Trump Dossier Author, Misled Judge](#)  
[Incendiary Rhetoric Boosts Cory Booker In 2020 Democrats' Race To Far Left](#)  
[Congress Busts Budget With Bipartisan Spending Deal](#)  
[IRS Overpaid Nearly \\$3.5 Billion In Obamacare Tax Credits In 2017, Can't Recoup Money](#)  
[Latin America Wary Of U.S. Harder Line Against Venezuela](#)

### ***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

ABC: Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; White House Aide Resignation; Immigration Deal; Trump-Military Parade; Russia-US Elections Interference; Florida Highway Shooting; Taiwan Earthquake; Vegas Shooting Investigation; Illinois Missing Mother; NFL Player-Home Break-In; Netflix Email Scam; Gerber Baby; SpaceX Rocket.  
CBS: Immigration Deal; White House Aide Resignation; Winter Olympics-North Korea; Trump-Military Parade; Severe Weather; Steve Wynn Resignation; Uber-Google Lawsuit; SpaceX Rocket; Taiwan Earthquake; Old Skeleton DNA; In-Home Healthcare; Song Writer; Gerber Baby; Young Pianist-Coding.  
NBC: White House Aide Resignation; Immigration Deal; Trump-Military Parade; Russia-US Elections Interference; Winter Olympics-North Korea; Flu Epidemic; Severe Weather; Smart-TV Warning; Steve Wynn Resignation; Taiwan Earthquake; Dunkin Donuts; Gerber Baby.

### ***Network TV At A Glance:***

White House Aide Resignation – 8 minutes, 5 seconds  
Immigration Deal – 6 minutes, 35 seconds  
Trump-Military Parade – 6 minutes, 10 seconds  
Severe Weather – 4 minutes, 10 seconds  
Taiwan Earthquake – 50 seconds

### ***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

ABC: Immigration Deal; White House Aide Resignation; VP-East Asia Tour; Winter Olympics; Texas-Police Shot.  
CBS: Immigration Deal; White House Aide Resignation; FBI Text Messages; E-Cig Health Risk; NCAA News; Wall Street News.  
FOX: Immigration Deal; White House Aide Resignation.  
NPR: Immigration Deal; Trump-Military Parade; Turkey-Kurdish Conflict; Wall Street News.

## **Washington Schedule**

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### **Today's Events In Washington.**

#### **White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Participates in a bilateral meeting with the President of Guatemala; delivers remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast; meets with Secretary of Defense James Mattis; has lunch with Secretary of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin; meets with Dr. Henry Kissinger.  
VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Participates in a briefing on the mission of Yokota Air Base and its joint efforts with Japan; participates in a tour of Yokota Air Base's command center; delivers remarks to troops; participates in a bilateral meeting with President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea; participates in a guestbook signing; has dinner with President Moon Jae-in.

**US Senate:** 10:00 AM Senate HELP Committee hearing on the opioid crisis – Hearing on 'The Opioid Crisis: Impact on Children and Families', with testimony from 525 Foundation co-founder Becky Savage; Vanderbilt University Medical Center Division of Neonatology Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Health Policy Stephen Patrick; and Casey Family Programs President and CEO Dr William Bell Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC  
<http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Energy Committee oversight hearing on infrastructure – Oversight hearing on 'Energy Infrastructure', with testimony from McKinstry Executive Vice President David Allen; Large Public Power Council President John Di Stasio; Baker Institute Fellow in Energy and Resource Economics Dr Kenneth Medlock; Itron CEO Phillip Mezey; Edison Electric Institute Executive Vice President for Business Operations Group & Regulatory Affairs Philip Moeller; and Interstate Natural Gas Association of America President and CEO Donald Santa Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 366, Washington, DC [www.energy.senate.gov](http://www.energy.senate.gov)



10:30 AM Senate Judiciary Committee Executive Business Meeting – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including consideration of nominations including Kurt Engelhardt to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit; Michael Brennan to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit; Barry Ashe to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana; Howard Nielson Jr. to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Utah; James Sweeney II to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Indiana; Susan Paradise Baxter to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania; Daniel Desmond Domenico to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Colorado; Adam Klein to be Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board Chairman; John Anderson to be U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico; Brandon Fremin to be U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana; and Brandon Fremin to be U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana, plus 'S.1917 Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017' Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:30 AM Senate Armed Services Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Paul Ney Jr. to be Department of Defense General Counsel; Kevin Fahey to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition; Thomas Ayres to be Department of the Air Force General Counsel; and Lisa Gordon-Hagerty to be Under Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Security Location: Hart Senate Office Building, Rm 216, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

11:00 AM Senate Banking Committee votes on Fed governor nominee – Executive Session, with agenda including consideration of nominations of Dr Marvin Goodfriend to be a Federal Reserve System Board of Governors member; Jelena McWilliams to be a Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Board of Directors member; and Thomas Workman to be a Financial Stability Oversight Council member, plus the subcommittee organization for the 2nd Session of the 115th Congress Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 538, Washington, DC <http://banking.senate.gov/>

2:00 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

Deadline for new funding deal to avert federal govt shutdown, after short shutdown last month – Funding for the federal govt due to expire, unless extended, following adoption of the House Amendment to the Senate Amendment with Further Amendment to 'H.R. 195' – a short-term continuing resolution, providing a two-and-a-half-week extension in funding – through both chambers of Congress on 22 Jan, although not until after a three-day partial shutdown of the federal govt followed a failure to meet a 19 Jan deadline. The bill featured a six-year extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program, but not any action on the expiring Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, although with Senate Republicans agreeing to Democratic demands to hold debate on the DACA issue \* Earlier this week, the House of Representatives passed another short-term extension, to fund govt through 23 Mar and to extend funding for the Department of Defense through the end of the fiscal year, although it was expected to face amendment in the Senate amid opposition from both parties Location: TBD <https://twitter.com/WhiteHouse>

**US House:** 2018 House Democratic Caucus Issues Conference – 2018 House Democratic Caucus Issues Conference. This year's theme is 'United For A Better Tomorrow', with discussion on the economy, education, health care, immigration, and economic challenges faced by women and working families. Former Vice President Joe Biden keynotes today, with other speakers throughout the Conference including former U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Preet Bharara, former Attorney General Eric Holder, former Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe, actor Aasif Mandvi, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, House Democratic Caucus Chairman Joe Crowley, Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez, Topeka, KS, Mayor Michelle De La Isla, and Hoboken, NJ, Mayor Ravi Bhalla \* Opening press conference features Reps. Pelosi and Crowley, Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, Assistant Minority Leader Jim Clyburn, Caucus Vice Chair Linda Sanchez, and Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (2:00 PM EST) \* Relocated from Cambridge, MD, to the U.S. Capitol at the last minute due to legislative business Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.dems.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseDemocrats>

Deadline for new funding deal to avert federal govt shutdown, after short shutdown last month – Funding for the federal govt due to expire, unless extended, following adoption of the House Amendment to the Senate Amendment with Further Amendment to 'H.R. 195' – a short-term continuing resolution, providing a two-and-a-half-week extension in funding – through both chambers of Congress on 22 Jan, although not until after a three-day partial shutdown of the federal govt followed a failure to meet a 19 Jan deadline. The bill featured a six-year extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program, but not any action on the expiring Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, although with Senate Republicans agreeing to Democratic demands to hold debate on the DACA issue \* Earlier this week, the House of Representatives passed

another short-term extension, to fund govt through 23 Mar and to extend funding for the Department of Defense through the end of the fiscal year, although it was expected to face amendment in the Senate amid opposition from both parties Location: TBD  
<https://twitter.com/WhiteHouse>

House meets for legislative business, in a change of plan caused by the looming shutdown – House of Representatives meets for legislative business \* Previously, no votes were scheduled in the chamber today, coinciding with the ongoing Democratic retreat, but the current measure funding federal govt expires at the end of today and a new agreement is needed Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

**Other:** 9:00 AM British politicians visit Washington, DC, as part of ongoing inquiry into fake news. – UK politicians visit Washington, DC, to question social media and tech companies on what they are doing to tackle disinformation as part of an ongoing inquiry into fake news Location: George Washington University, 2100 Foxhall Rd NW, Washington, DC  
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/digital-culture-media-and-sport-committee/> <https://twitter.com/CommonsCMS>

1:30 PM DNC Vice Chair Meng participates in a press call on the Trump administration's immigration policies – Democratic National Committee Vice Chair Grace Meng, Washington State Sen. Manka Dhirga, and attorney Parthiv Patel discuss immigration policies and inaction from the Trump administration, and the impacts on Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) families, via press call Location: TBD <http://www.democrats.org/> <https://twitter.com/TheDemocrats>

6:00 PM Washington Diplomat Ambassador Insider series event with Belize Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Daniel Gutierrez Location: 1310 U St, NW, Washington, DC  
<http://www.washdiplomat.com/> <https://twitter.com/diplomatnews>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Have you seen President Trump's hair flapping in the wind? If you haven't, you're in for a treat. ... Trump is getting onto the Air Force One, heading into Mar-a-Lago for the weekend, and his hair tried to fly off without him. Now the red hats make sense. ... According to White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders, the President's hair stood still, and he doesn't have a bald spot, and anything to the contrary is fake news."

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "There's new reports that Donald Trump still wants to meet with Special Counsel Robert Mueller even though his lawyers are strongly advising him not to. They want assurances that Mueller's team won't try to entrap the President by doing sneaky things like asking him questions."

**Stephen Colbert:** "Now, we know Mueller wants to interview President Trump, but Trump's lawyers are desperate to avoid that because Trump could put himself in legal jeopardy through what legal scholars refer to as 'talking.'"

**James Corden:** "Let's get into the news. As you know, the government almost shut down today. The stock market has been volatile. They still have to deal on immigration. So of course, President Trump wants to throw a parade."

**James Corden:** "A recent article says that President Trump is obsessed with getting the Pentagon to throw a grand military-style parade in Washington DC, complete with tanks and missiles. Yeah, because nobody loves a parade more than a clown."

**Trevor Noah:** "America doesn't need a big parade to convince the world it has a military. Trust me, the world knows America has a military. It's in their countries right now. We don't need one. If you really want a parade, just like, every time there's a drone strike, just fly another drone right behind it playing marching music."

**Trevor Noah:** "You know it's bad when even Fox News thinks this is a waste of money. They're like, 'You can't spend that how much a parade. You need save it for sexual harassment settlements. Come on!'"

**Jimmy Fallon:** "Apparently, President Trump wants to hold a big military parade in Washington. Yep, it would have tanks, airplanes, and soldiers marching, and at the end of the parade, Trump would be like, 'Wait, where's Santa?'"

**Jimmy Fallon:** "The Trump Administration is thinking about adding work requirements and raising rent for people living in public housing. Americans are like, 'Great, let's start with the White House.'"

**Seth Meyers:** "According to CNN, President Trump still wants to talk to Special Counsel Robert Mueller despite his lawyers advising him not to. With one source saying Trump thinks he can work this. Oh, yes, please try to work it with Robert Mueller. I think Trump would have a better chance on 'Jeopardy.'"

**Seth Meyers:** "According to the Washington Post, at President Trump's request, Pentagon officials have started planning a grand military parade for later this year. What a great way to show the world that if you mess with us, we will screw up our own traffic."

**Seth Meyers:** "Lawmakers have started speaking out against President Trump's proposed military parade through Washington, with Sen. Dick Durbin calling it a fantastic waste of money to amuse the President. Which, by the way, was the original title of 'Fox & Friends.'"

**Seth Meyers:** [Referring to the inauguration crowd] "And if you are worried a tank won't fit on Pennsylvania Avenue, don't worry. If it is anything like Trump's last parade, there will be plenty of room."

**Jordan Klepper:** "Trump is a go-getter. You see? He sees things he likes. He goes and then he gets them. He sees the presidency, he gets it. He sees a military parade in France, he gets it. He sees a woman he hasn't married, he gets it. He sees an onion ring on his pillow case, he gets it."

**Samantha Bee:** "The Washington Post reported this morning that the President was left alone with the memo for several hours so he could read it. Left alone with the memo? For several hours? Then I assume he paid that memo \$130,000, and no one but Donald and the memo will ever know what happened in that room."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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- Billings (MT) Gazette: BLM Pays Off Portion Of Debt As Old As Montana, Giving 2,126 Acres To The State.
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## DOI In The News

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### New Interior Dept. Order Expands Hunting Access On Western Land.

[The Hill](#) (2/9, Green) reports Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, at the Western Conservation and Hunting Expo in Salt Lake City on Friday, "issued an order...to expand big-game hunting access across the western U.S." According to the Interior Department, the order will "improve wildlife management and conservation and expand opportunities for big game hunting by improving priority habitats within important and migration corridors across the West." The Department also "said 'priority' states for the new measure would include Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming." In a statement, Zinke said, "My goal is healthy herds for American hunters and wildlife watchers, and this order will help establish better migration corridors for some of North America's most iconic big game species."

[Utah Policy](#) (2/11) reports that the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action applauded Zinke's order. NRA-ILA Executive Director Chris W. Cox said, "With this action today, the Secretary is taking steps to protect healthy wildlife populations and recognize that sportsmen are an integral part of modern natural resource management. This action will help make certain that future generations can enjoy abundant, healthy game populations."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/9, Siegel) reports that "advocacy groups who have opposed Zinke's public lands agenda said they would take a wait and see approach to his latest action." Nada Culver, Senior Counsel and Director of the BLM Action Center at the Wilderness Society, said, "We would like to see protection of wildlife migration corridors, winter range and habitat writ large, so this order could be a good way to accomplish those goals. However, success will require management to protect these lands from harm, such as from oil and gas drilling, and funding. The budget this administration is issuing Monday will be a chance to see if there is a real commitment here or we should look to their recent actions to put more habitat at risk."

The [AP](#) (2/9, McCOMBS) reports that "Matthew Kauffman, a University of Wyoming associate professor and big-game wildlife migration expert, applauded the move that comes as researchers using advanced technology can now precisely document migration corridors and the roads, fences and housing developments that impede them." The Center for American Progress, "a liberal think tank, blasted the decision as nothing more than 'bureaucratic window dressing' to cover up damage Zinke has done to the habitat."

Also reporting are the [Denver Post](#) (2/11, Finley), the [St. George \(UT\) News](#) (2/9, Witham), the [St. George & Southern Utah Independent](#) (2/10), the [Westerner](#) (2/10, DuBois), [AmmoLand](#) (2/10), [KOAA-TV Colorado Springs \(CO\)](#) Colorado Springs, CO (2/11, Dumas), [KSTU-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (2/9, Edwards, Lawrence), [KTVX-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (2/10, Francis), [KUTV-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (2/9, Mullahy), and [KSL-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (2/10, Jolley).

Local TV coverage was provided by  [KSTU-TV](#) Salt Lake City (2/9).

***Ad Challenges Interior Secretary Zinke To Protect Public Lands.*** [Public News Service](#) (2/9) reports that "hunters, anglers and conservation groups are running full-page ads in the Salt Lake Tribune and Deseret News to send a message to U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who is scheduled to speak Friday in Salt Lake City." The ad "features men and women hunting and fishing across the West, and makes the case that public lands 'from sagebrush country to national monuments' provide clean water, sustain fish and wildlife, and support fishing and hunting." It includes the tag line, "Protect the land and you protect everything that comes with it."

### **Zinke Trades Barbs With Protesters Over Shrunken Monuments.**

[Courthouse News](#) (2/9, Renda) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "pushed back against accusations that he reduced two national monuments in Utah to pave the way for mining and oil and gas companies during an outdoor exposition in Salt Lake City on Friday." Zinke's appearance at the Western Hunting and Conservation Expo was "greeted by a host of protesters." But Zinke "said reports of national monuments being opened up for oil, gas or even uranium mining are 'nefarious and false.'"

Local TV coverage was provided by  [KUTV-TV](#) Salt Lake City (2/9).

***Vandals Leave Message Supporting Bears Ears At Capitol.*** [KSL-TV](#) Salt Lake City (2/10, Romero) reports that "police are searching for two vandals after a proclamation in support of the Bears Ears National Monument was found spray-painted across a wall of the Senate Building at the Utah Capitol complex early Saturday." Investigators are "reviewing surveillance footage of two people approaching the building from the east shortly after midnight, spray-painting the message and fleeing, said Utah Highway Patrol Sgt. Tom Schneider, who is assigned to the Capitol."

### **Interior Secretary Zinke Details Reorganization Plans To Utah Leaders.**

[Utah Real Estate News](#) (2/9) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke met with Utah Gov. Gary Herbert and legislative leadership on Friday "detailing plans for a massive reorganization of his agency to better serve states in the West." Herbert said, "The Department of the Interior's plan to realign the regions in their department reflects good old-fashioned common sense. Practical solutions like this can help restore trust between the states and the federal government." He added, "I look forward to additional discussion regarding this proposal with my fellow governors in Washington, D.C., at the National Governors Association meetings later this month."

Additional coverage was provided by [Utah Policy](#) (2/11).

### **Zinke Met Israeli Energy Boss Who Called Arabs A 'Cancer'.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/9, Colman) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "met with a far-right former Israeli politician who heads an oil and gas company that experts say is violating international law and U.S. policy." According to the article, "the Sept. 14, 2017, meeting between Zinke and Efraim 'Effie' Eitam, a nationalist ex-Israeli member of its parliament, the Knesset, and known for anti-Arab sentiments, appeared on the Interior chief's public calendar." Eitam, who leads Afek Oil and Gas, "said in an interview that Afek's energy exploration didn't come up in his meeting with Zinke, who is overseeing a major expansion of oil and gas development on public land."

### **QUWF Leadership Meets With Secretary Of The Interior.**

The [Buffalo \(MO\) Reflex](#) (2/9) reports that "at the 2018 Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade show, the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation's executive staff, Craig Alderman and Christine



Abmeyer, were invited to meet with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to discuss veteran-based companies and the efforts and such obstacles as getting more veterans outside and involved." Alderman said, "Secretary Zinke discussed with me the challenges of being a veteran-based company and the opportunity for others to cooperate better in getting more veterans outside, involved and recognized." He added, "We also discussed directly matters of wildlife management on public lands; the pending farm bill and its need for oversight and review with regard to wildlife portions and efficiency; cross checks and review of the uses of the Pittman/Robertson dollars by the states; and the significant costs of wildfire control from the U.S.F.S. budget devastating other programs from a cost standpoint."

### **Reorganization Of Interior Department Could Result In A Grand Junction Office.**

The [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/12, Harmon) reports that "the Interior Department's reorganization plans for three of its agencies still could include moving Bureau of Land Management personnel to Grand Junction." Interior Secretary Ryn Zinke is "considering reorganizing the way Interior manages its lands and resources, possibly by establishing offices along major river drainages." The article notes that "the Colorado and Gunnison rivers meet in Grand Junction before flowing into Utah, making the city a potentially ideal location for such an initiative."

### **Man Famed For Lincoln Memorial Mowing Pushes For Shutdown-Proof Monuments.**

[WTOP-FM](#) Washington (2/9, Domen) reports that a bill has been introduced that "would require both the Interior Department and Agriculture Department to work out deals with state and local governments so that 'public land, open air monuments and memorials, units of the National Park System, units of the National Wildlife Refuge System, and units of the National Forest System' would be maintained and operated even during a federal shutdown." The bill, called "The Monuments Protection Act," is backed by California Republican Congressman Darrell Issa and D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton. It was has the support of a man who mowed the grass around the Lincoln Memorial during the government shutdown of 2013.

### **Group Alleges Sage Grouse Farm Received Special Treatment From Feds.**

The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (2/11, Richards) reports that "an oilman's desire to breed the imperiled sage grouse at his northern Wyoming bird farm found preferential treatment with the Interior Department, an environmental group argued recently citing documents gathered from a recent public records request." Western Values Project "obtained a series of emails between federal officials and prospective sage grouse-farmer Diemer True regarding his captive breeding trial." Western Values claims "that the Interior's stance shows preferential treatment for industry, even when it's just one individual," but "the oilman said in an interview Friday that there was nothing inappropriate about his request for support from the Interior."

### **Administration Imposes Sweeping Limits On Federal Actions Against Companies.**

The [New York Times](#) (2/10, Pear) says the Trump Administration "has adopted new limits on the use of 'guidance documents'" that federal agencies issue. The move "advances a goal declared by President Trump in his first days in office: to reduce the burden and cost of federal rules and requirements." However, because guidance documents "offer the government's interpretation of laws," restricting them could "crimp enforcement of crucial protections," according to consumer advocates.

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Ex-Bureau Of Indian Affairs Employee Gets Probation For 'Date' With Prostitute At Federal Building.**

The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/9, Johnson) reports that "what started as a sex trafficking investigation ultimately cost a Billings man his longtime job with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and six months of federal probation after he paid a teenage girl for sex at his office." U.S. District Judge Susan Watters on Friday "sentenced Bigwind Windy Boy, 41, to the probationary term, along with 50 hours of community service, for his conviction on using an interstate facility in aid or racketeering, that is, using a cellphone to promote prostitution."

### **Oglala Sioux Officer Killed In Apparent Domestic Dispute.**



The [AP](#) (2/11) reports that the FBI “says an officer with the Oglala Sioux tribal police department was shot and killed in an apparent domestic dispute. ... The FBI, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Oglala Sioux tribal police are investigating.”

### **So What Exactly Is ‘Blood Quantum’?**

. [NPR](#) (2/9, Chow) reported on blood quantum, “a highly controversial measurement” for Native Americans, which “restrict who can be a citizen of a tribe.”

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **BLM Director In Nevada Leaving For Firefighting Post.**

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/9, Brean) reports that the director of the Bureau of Land Management in Nevada is “leaving to take over as the bureau’s top man at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho.” John Ruhs announced his move in an email to BLM staff members Friday. Ruhs said in his email to staff, “During my BLM career, Nevada is the state that I have spent the most time in. I truly love the resources, the people and the wide variety of activities and issues that we face.”

### **Cassidy Works To Give Lake Bistineau Land Back To Citizens.**

The [Minden \(LA\) Press-Herald](#) (2/9, Daniel) reports that Sen. Bill Cassidy’s bill that would return ownership of “roughly 200 acres of land around Lake Bistineau” to “private citizens living on the land” went before a subcommittee hearing Wednesday. Cassidy questioned a Bureau of Land Management official “at the subcommittee meeting about the convoluted ownership history of this land.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Bossier \(LA\) Press-Tribune](#) (2/9).

### **BLM Pays Off Portion Of Debt As Old As Montana, Giving 2,126 Acres To The State.**

The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/10, French) reports that Bureau of Land Management acting state director Jon Raby on Jan. 26 “signed an agreement giving the state of Montana 2,126 acres to fulfill a portion of a debt owed since 1889.” The land will “satisfy more than \$1.82 million of the BLM’s \$4.1 million debt.” Renee Johnson of the BLM’s Montana-Dakota realty office in Billings said, “We’re excited to get it done.”

### **Douglas County Receives \$28.7K In Timber Payments From BLM.**

The [Roseburg \(OR\) News-Review](#) (2/9, Hoard) reports that “Douglas County will receive \$28,734 in timber payments in accordance with the Coos Bay Wagon Road Act,” the Bureau of Land Management has announced. The BLM will “also issue \$241,839 to Coos County.” Brian Steed, BLM’s deputy director for programs and policy said, “These funds are important to these counties, and we’re glad to play a role in delivering them.”

### **BLM Outlines Plan For Massive Network Of Fire Breaks In Great Basin.**

The [Elko \(NV\) Daily Free Press](#) (2/9) reports that the Bureau of Land Management last week presented plans “for a 10-year program that would install fire breaks and restore rangeland in the vast Great Basin.” During a meeting in Elko on Thursday, “wildlife biologist Kelly Michelsen explained the process and played a video explaining how the installation of fuel breaks in Idaho have helped reduce the size of fires once they break out.” Comments may be submitted until March 1.

### **BLM Leads Public Tour Of Horse Prairie Fire Area.**

The [Roseburg \(OR\) News-Review](#) (2/9, Hoard) reports that “during a public tour of the Horse Prairie Fire area Wednesday, Bureau of Land Management representatives talked about proposals for helping the forestland to recover, including removing fire-damaged trees and undergrowth.” The BLM “plans to harvest both burnt and green trees on about 580 acres – about 8 percent of the 7,645 acres of BLM-managed land affected by the fire.” Krisann Kosel, Roseburg BLM fire ecologist, “said she’s proposing to build 16 miles of fuel breaks – or gaps between trees that can stop or slow down a fire – and connect them to existing fuel breaks that were made during the fire.”

### **BLM Schedules Meetings To Consider Changes To DRECP.**

The [Victorville \(CA\) Daily Press](#) (2/9) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has announced it will host public meetings to consider changes to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. The BLM "said it will host eight public scoping meetings in the process to consider amending three land use plans that underlie the DRECP."

#### **Artist-In-Residence Sought For Birds Of Prey Area In Idaho.**

The [AP](#) (2/10) reports that the Bureau of Land Management is "seeking an artist-in-residence to spend a week at the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area in southwestern Idaho." Applications are being accepted until March 1.

### **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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#### **Florida Petroleum Council Roots For State To Be Included In Zinke's Offshore Drilling Plan.**

[Offshore Energy Today](#) (2/11) reports that Florida's exemption from the federal offshore drilling plan has yet to be formalized, leaving "both environmentalists and pro-drilling voices" uncertain if the state's waters are actually off the table for offshore drilling. In a statement on Thursday, Florida Petroleum Council Director David Mica said the plan was critical to enabling Floridians "to reap the long-term benefits of affordable and reliable U.S.-produced energy and specifically secure Florida's long-term economic future with new tax revenue, new jobs and new industries to support energy development." Looking ahead, Mica said, "Gathering data on our long-term energy resources is a critical step in strengthening our national security and making America energy self-sufficient in the long-term."

[UPI](#) (2/9, Graeber) reported that industry supporters view the offshore drilling plan positively and believe it offers Florida "emerging opportunities to capitalize on U.S. momentum." Florida Petroleum Council Executive Director David Mica "said putting Florida on the map could bring in new sources of revenue and create a new economic segment." According to Mica, "The Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf has not been surveyed in more than thirty years, and with rapid advancements in safety and assessment technologies in the past decade, we can safely and accurately determine what energy potential exists off our coasts."

#### **Oil Drilling Tensions Rise As Feds Prepare For Columbia Hearing.**

[Columbia \(SC\) State](#) (2/9, Fretwell) reports that South Carolina will host a public hearing in Columbia on Tuesday regarding the federal offshore drilling plan. Supporters of the plan, such as the American Petroleum Institute, say opening Atlantic waters for oil production "could have remarkable benefits for job creation, U.S. energy security, domestic investment and revenue to the government." Mark Harmon, executive director for the South Carolina Petroleum Council, said the plan is a "crucial step in a long process of assessing U.S. energy resources." Moreover, "It's been 30 years since we last examined the outer continental shelf in the Atlantic, and modern advances in seismic technology will allow us to more accurately determine what energy resources are available for our nation's future."

#### **Interior Says \$160 Oil Won't Help Most Areas; Industry Differs.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/9, Hobson, King) reports that "record high oil prices aren't likely to attract significant oil and gas drilling in the vast majority of U.S. offshore areas targeted in the Trump administration's recent draft five-year oil and gas leasing plan." The article cites a Bureau of Ocean Energy Management report released last month, reporting that "even if oil prices climbed to \$160 per barrel, little or no oil is likely to be pumped from the offshore Straits of Florida, the Oregon/Washington outer continental shelf areas or 10 of the 14 Alaska planning areas identified in Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's 2019-24 leasing program." However, "oil and gas industry officials are rejecting BOEM's calculations, which they say vastly underestimate the amount of undiscovered oil and gas likely to be available along U.S. shores."

### **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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#### **KID Delays Project Irrigation Season.**

The [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/11, Dilleuth) reports that "a drought year similar to 2015's dry conditions are anticipated by the Klamath Irrigation District, and without the financial resources available in 2015, as well as at least a week delay in water delivery to Klamath Project

irrigators in April, according to Ty Kliwer, board president, on Friday." The article says that "with snow pack levels at approximately 33 percent of normal for the year and a projected drought yet to be declared in Klamath County, the A Canal headgates will be opened April 16 — normally they are opened April 1." Also, "water delivery normally begins April 15, and that will be delayed until April 23 this season."

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **Exxon, Oil Industry Sit Down With White House On Rollback Of Offshore Rules.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/9, Siciliano, Siegal) reported that the White House has "begun sitting down with the oil industry" to finalize language on its rollback of offshore drilling safety rules. According to White House records, "meetings opened with the oil industry on Feb. 1" in a gathering called for by the American Petroleum Institute. "Both big and independent leaders of the industry" were reportedly at the meeting, including ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron, BP, as well as Anadarko and Hess.

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **The Arctic Refuge Still Bears Scars From Oil Exploration In The 1980s.**

The [Huffington Post](#) (2/9, D'Angelo) reports that exploration crews evaluating reserves in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the 1980's "left lasting scars on the tundra — 'seismic trails' that are still visible more than 30 years later." Now, scientists and environmentalists are worried that "the refuge will face a second round of damage as the Trump administration works to lift restrictions on seismic exploration in the refuge." The article says that "today's 3-D seismic surveys require vibrations be much closer together," and "the impact this method would have on ANWR's plants and soils 'would likely be much greater,' according to a 2001 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS) report."

### **Texas Wildlife Refuge Could Become Fierce Battleground Over Trump's Proposed Border Wall.**

[USA Today](#) (2/9, Jervis) reports that "the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge — a 2,088-acre tangle of trees, animals, birds and butterflies straddling the U.S.-Mexico border in South Texas — could become the site of one of the fiercest standoffs between federal engineers on one side and locals and environmentalists opposing a border wall on the other." Customs and Border Patrol officials "have said the refuge would be one of the first sites for Trump's proposed wall, which would rise atop the levee that runs through the property." Last week, the article says, "more than 700 protesters gathered in a field next to the refuge to denounce the prospect of a wall there."

### **Lawsuit Over Golden-Cheeked Warbler Can Proceed.**

The [San Antonio Rivard Report](#) (2/9, Gibbons) reports that "a lawsuit over an endangered songbird that pits the state of Texas against the U.S. Department of the Interior will continue, although a federal judge has narrowed the scope of the lawsuit." The ruling concerns "a lawsuit over the golden-cheeked warbler, a 3- to 5-inch migratory songbird, filed by the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a free-market think tank, on behalf of the Texas General Land Office." In his holding, U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks "dismissed two of the state's three claims against the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service." The decision "allows the General Land Office to proceed with its central claim: that the federal government did not properly consider 'new and substantial scientific data' in keeping the warbler on the endangered list or designate habitat that is critical for the bird's survival."

### **Refuge Feels The Heat With Drone Technology.**

The [AP](#) (2/10, Thompson) reports that Kenai National Wildlife Refuge has been using two 3DR surveillance drones "over the last year to monitor wild areas." The drones have "helped simplify...refuge operations." According to Shay Hurd, refuge officer with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "right now the drone is being used on a small scale, but eventually the technology could be expanded for wider use — like during wildfires or to check hotspots across the refuge." It could also help with search and rescue operations.

## National Park Service

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### U.S. Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash Kills Three: Report.

[Reuters](#) (2/11, Simpson) reports that a tourist helicopter “crashed in the United States’ Grand Canyon on Saturday, killing three people and injuring four others, Arizona media and a federal aviation spokesman said.” The helicopter was on a tour of the canyon when it crashed, according to a dispatcher for the Hualapai Department of Emergency Services. FAA spokesman Allen Kenitzer said the helicopter was a Eurocopter EC130 from Airbus and crashed under unknown circumstances. Kenitzer said the FAA will investigate the crash.

[ABC News](#) (2/11, Hartounian) reports that six passengers and a pilot “were on board the Papillion Grand Canyon Helicopters chopper when it crashed” around 5:20 p.m. on Saturday. On its website, the company “says it flies roughly 600,000 passengers a year on Grand Canyon and other tours.” It also says that it “abides by flight safety rules and regulations that substantially exceed the regulations required by the Federal Aviation Administration.”

[CNN](#) (2/10, Marsh, Sutton, Cullinane) quotes police chief Francis E. Bradley Sr. of the Hualapai reservation as saying, “We are having difficulties getting the four people out of the crash site area to the hospital. ... It is too windy and it’s dark and the area is very rugged.” FAA spokesman Allen Kenitzer “said the aircraft sustained considerable damage in the crash.” [NBC News](#) (2/11, MUSE, HELSEL) reports Bradley “said rescue efforts were still ongoing late Saturday and three of the four injured have yet to be flown out.”

The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/10, Frank, Nájuez) reports that “helicopter and airplane crashes at the canyon date back decades. The creation of the Federal Aviation Administration stemmed from a 1956 crash at the canyon that killed 128 people.”

Additional coverage is provided by [CBS News](#) (2/11), the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (2/11, Leone), and the [New York Daily News](#) (2/11, Hensley, Durkin).

### Mount Rainier National Park Posts Highest Visitation Numbers Since 1995.

The [Tacoma \(WA\) News Tribune](#) (2/10, Hill) reports that Mount Rainier National Park welcomed “1,415,867 recreation visitors in 2017 – a 4.3 percent increase over 2016 (1,237,231) – and the most since 1995.” The park saw 1,438,227 visitors in 1995.

### Pecos National Historical Park Aims To Be More Interactive, Accessible.

The [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/11, Bennett) reports that “to update the visitor’s center exhibit and help attract a broader crowd,” Pecos National Historical Park is “taking on a nearly \$1 million, three-year project to transform it.” One of the changes will be to “make informational panels on the exhibition cases ADA-compliant.” Also, officials hope to make “the space more interactive.”

### Acadia National Park To Host Winter Festival.

The [AP](#) (2/10) reports that Acadia National Park is “hosting a winter festival featuring Dutch oven cooking, snowshoeing and a traditional baked bean ‘suppa.’” The festival will be held from Friday to Sunday at the nonprofit Schoodic Institute in Acadia National Park.

### Swords To A Gunfight: Relive A Tragic Military Mismatch At Moores Creek.

The [Wilmington \(NC\) Port City Daily](#) (2/11, Schachtman) reports that the National Park Service will “memorialize the 242nd anniversary of the Battle of Moores Creek on Saturday, Feb. 24, and Sunday, Feb. 25.” During park hours, “the park will hold a series of events and demonstrations.”

### Iconic Linn Cove Viaduct To Receive Facelift During Upcoming Closure.

The [Augusta \(VA\) Free Press](#) (2/10) reports that the National Park Service has announced “the closure of the Linn Cove Viaduct on the Blue Ridge Parkway for surface repaving and bridge maintenance from March 1, 2018 through May 24, 2018.” The [Hendersonville \(NC\) Times-News](#) (2/9, Marusak) reports that “crews will remove and replace the asphalt pavement, waterproofing membrane and joints on the bridge.”

## Insular And International Affairs

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### Interior Announces \$5M In NMI Infrastructure Funds.

[Marianas Variety](#) (2/12) reports that Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular and International

Affairs Doug Domenech has “approved \$5 million in capital infrastructure program grant funding to the CNMI, for fiscal year 2018.” Domenech said, “The Department of the Interior is pleased to provide continued support to Governor Torres and his administration in meeting requirements that will continue the necessary work of improving infrastructure and safety, as well as meeting environmental standards necessary to protect the public.”

The [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (2/12) reports that “this is the fourth and final year of funding support provided through the Office of Insular Affairs in support of the CNMI government meeting Stipulated Order No. 2 originally entered by the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands on March 11, 2009.”

### **Here’s A Breakdown Of How Much The USVI Stands To Receive From The \$89 Billion Disaster Aid Package.**

The [Virgin Islands Consortium \(VIR\)](#) (2/9) reports that “included in a U.S. government spending bill that was signed into law by President Trump this morning, was \$89.3 billion in disaster aid for U.S. states and territories affected by natural disasters in 2017 – wildfires, hurricanes and flooding.” According to the article, “of the \$89.3 billion, several billion dollars in funding have been allocated to the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.” The article provides “a breakdown of the dollars, per Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett, whose efforts helped in securing the funds.”

### **Virgin Islands National Park Is Still Trying To Recover From Hurricane Irma.**

[NPR](#) (2/9, Allen) reports that “the Virgin Islands National Park on St. John’s has reopened but the staff is still assessing the damage to park buildings and the coral reefs.” It’s still unknown “how long it will take to remove sunken vessels and restore amenities to the park, that before the storms, received nearly a half million visitors a year.”

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **This Should Have Been The Fix For Fracking Quakes. It Wasn’t.**

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/9, Wethe) reported that in an effort to decrease seismic activity that has accompanied a drilling boom in Oklahoma, state regulators ordered drillers to curb the way they discarded drilling wastewater. To the satisfaction of regulators, a reduction in wastewater injections initially resulted in a decrease in seismic events from five to fewer than two per day. However, the cause of earthquakes has once again become a controversial issue ever since earthquakes began “popping up in a relatively new corner of Oklahoma’s shale patch” where “almost no wastewater is jettisoned underground.” Research is still underway “as to what’s behind the frack-quake phenomenon,” critics of hydraulic fracturing warn that the current regulations in place don’t do enough to prevent “large mass-magnitude earthquakes.”

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Commentary: I Joined The Marines To Fight For The Best Of America.**

In an op-ed for the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/10, Krier), Justin Krier, a veteran from Utah who served in Afghanistan with the Marine Corps, joins “fellow veterans across the country to speak out in vehement disagreement with President Trump for his attack on our freedom to enjoy our protected public lands.” Krier takes issue with the move to shrink the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments. Krier believes that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke “should know as well as anyone, as an outdoorsman and veteran, the value of protecting land and ensuring that outdoor access is preserved, not limited.”

In an op-ed for the [Oregonian](#) (2/9, Davis), Sean Davis, a veteran and a Purple Heart recipient, urges Zinke to “reflect on his own experience after leaving the Marines and ask himself if taking national monuments away from the American public truly is in our country’s best interest.”

In an op-ed for the [Asheville \(NC\) Citizen-Times](#) (2/10, Smith), Sharon Smith, a USAF combat veteran, argues that “our public lands improve the health and well-being of Americans, especially veterans.” Smith hopes public officials “learn to embrace the non-extractive values of our national forests and desert landscapes.”

### **Select The Worst Trump Minion.**

In her [New York Times](#) (2/9, Collins) column, Gail Collins reviews the record of several Trump Administration officials in a bid to determine the “worst Trump minion,” based upon some “major officials who are still standing, more or less.” Her list includes DHS Secretary Nielsen, HHS Secretary Azar, Education Secretary DeVos, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Pruitt, Attorney General Sessions, US Trade Representative Lighthizer, Commerce Secretary Ross, Treasury Secretary Mnuchin, and Interior Secretary Zinke.

### **The BLM Has Channeled More Than \$110,000 To The SWCD.**

In an op-ed for the [Alamogordo \(NM\) Daily News](#) (2/10, Stevens), Deborah Stevens, the Bureau of Land Management’s Las Cruces Public Affairs Specialist, writes that “for more than a decade, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has worked with individuals, natural resource agencies and institutions to enhance the overall health of public lands in southern New Mexico,” including “the reduction of noxious and invasive weeds throughout the state.” Stevens writes that “under the Restore New Mexico initiative, the BLM Las Cruces District has worked with the Otero Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and several local ranchers to reduce a noxious and invasive weed species called African Rue.”

### **In Our View: Cheers & Jeers.**

The [Clark County \(WA\) Columbian](#) (2/10) “jeers” a mining project near Mount St. Helens, which could be approved by the Bureau of Land Management. The paper opposes the project because “it would be detrimental to the ecology of the area.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Lease The OCS—to Benefit All Americans.* [Canada Free Press](#) (2/9, Driessen).
- *Why Trump’s Offshore Drilling Lease Sale Shouldn’t Cause Anyone To Jump Off The Deep End.* [Farmington \(NM\) Daily Times](#) (2/11, Ozkan).
- *Offshore Oil ‘Hearing’ That Wasn’t.* [Santa Rosa \(CA\) Press Democrat](#) (2/10).
- *We Have Moral Responsibility To Change Environment Course: Guestview.* [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (2/9, Gutierrez).
- *Editorial: Don’t Drill, Baby, Don’t.* [Albany \(NY\) Times Union](#) (2/12).
- *Trump’s Giveaway To Big Oil Is Coming To A Coast Near You.* [Marin \(CA\) Independent Journal](#) (2/10, McGuire).
- *Our View: Energy And The Future.* [Lompoc \(CA\) Record](#) (2/11).
- *Our View: Energy And The Future.* [Santa Maria \(CA\) Times](#) (2/11).
- *Not Off Our Coast.* [Cape Cod \(MA\) Times](#) (2/11).
- *California Needs A Workable Delta Tunnel Plan.* [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/10).
- *1 Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Tunnel Is No Better Than 2.* [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/10).
- *Experience Our Magnificent Outdoors To Learn Why We’re Great.* [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (2/9, Seeger).
- *When The Trumpies Disparage Florida Key Deer, They’ve Gone Too Far.* [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (2/8, Grimm).
- *A New Partnership Is Needed.* [Citrus County \(FL\) Chronicle](#) (2/11).
- *Hidden Cost Of Federal Recognition Of Native American Tribes.* [TIME](#) (2/9, Coleman).

## **Top National News**

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### **Media Analyses: Funding Concerns Endanger Trump Infrastructure Plan.**

Coverage previewing President Trump’s Monday roll-out of his infrastructure plan is limited and fairly critical, with many reports focusing on reportedly unclear sources of funding, as well as on criticisms that the proposal does not go nearly far enough. The [AP](#) (2/11, Lemire, Crutsinger) reports that the proposal “fulfills a number of campaign goals, but relies heavily on state and local governments to produce much of the funding.” The \$1.5 trillion plan “is centered on using \$200 billion in federal money to leverage local and state tax dollars to fix America’s infrastructure, such as roads, highways, ports and airports.”

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/11, story 4, 0:35, Llamas) and the [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/11, story 6, 0:20) briefly previewed the plan. On CBS, Errol Barnett reported that Trump “will



try to put the focus back on legislation” by announcing the plan. But David Wright said on ABC that “the word ‘infrastructure’ is almost a bad omen in the White House. This is at least the third time they’ve tried to roll out infrastructure week. Each time, it keeps getting derailed.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/11, Davis) reports that the proposal “faces long odds on Capitol Hill, where members of both parties – particularly Democrats – are skeptical of any plan that fails to create a dedicated new funding stream to address the nation’s crumbling infrastructure.” There is also doubt about whether “such a small federal investment will be sufficient to spur an infrastructure spending boom.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/11, Wagner, Long) reports that House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster said on Sunday that “legislation ‘needs to be bipartisan, fiscally responsible and make real long-term investments in our nation,’” and Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-IL), “a member of the House Problem Solvers Caucus that works on bipartisan solutions,” said, “I think it’s just dead on arrival. ... It’s not a plan that will really work.”

Much of the coverage focuses on the source of funding. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/11, Ballhaus, Mann) reports that it is unclear where the federal dollars will come from, since the White House plans to propose paying for it with funding cuts that may be irrelevant given the budget that was agreed to last week. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/11, King) reports that the plan will be “a tough sell for many lawmakers” over “who will provide the money.” [Newsweek](#) (2/11, Goodkind) reports that a senior White House official said that the Administration “intended to fund the \$200 billion in spending from ‘savings from other areas of the federal budget,’ meaning cuts to other programs.” The [Daily Caller](#) (2/11, Phippen) reports that House Freedom Caucus Chair Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) said, “I think [the budget deal] does hurt the chances for an infrastructure package to get done, unless you use the money we’re just now spending. I think there’s not going to be the appetite to continue to add additional monies without real offsets.”

In a [Yahoo! Finance](#) (2/11) column headlined “There’s No Money For All The Spending Trump Wants,” Rick Newman writes that while Trump has a “lofty goal,” the plan “won’t identify any new revenue sources to finance those projects.” [Politico](#) (2/11, Gurciullo) reports that one Administration official said the plan “would be ‘a permanent fix.’” But “many infrastructure advocates believe that the real fix that’s needed is a permanent new revenue stream, something Trump’s plan doesn’t address.” House Transportation Committee ranking member Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) said, “This is not a real infrastructure plan – it’s simply another scam, an attempt by this Administration to privatize critical government functions, and create windfalls for their buddies on Wall Street.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/11, Miller) reports that the plan “outlined by the White House sets four goals: Stimulate \$1.5 trillion of new investment in infrastructure; Shorten the permitting process to 2 years; Target invest in rural infrastructure such as broadband internet service with \$50 billion in block grants to states.; [and] Improve workforce training, including expanding Pell Grant eligibility to students pursuing certification or credentials for in-demand fields.” The [New York Post](#) (2/11, Schultz, Trefethen) reports that while the plan “would set aside \$50 billion for rural infrastructure programs, it doesn’t give special preference to projects with regional or national significance.”

[Breitbart](#) (2/11, Moons) reports, “One senior administration official said that President Trump and his Cabinet will be traveling across the nation to sell the infrastructure plan.”

Gerald Seib writes in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/11) that the plan leaves the bulk of the effort – both financially and in terms of identifying and carrying out projects --- to states and municipalities, which could require tax increases or bond issues at those levels.

Ben Jacobs of The Guardian [tweeted](#) that the plan includes “only \$200bn of federal money,” while Jonathan Weisman of the New York Times [tweeted](#), “Just think how a major infrastructure proposal would have gone over BEFORE Congress passed a \$1.5 trillion tax cut, then raised spending by more than \$300 billion.” James Hohmann of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), “It’s infrastructure week – again!!”

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/11, Niquette), [The Hill](#) (2/11, Shelbourne), and [CNN Money](#) (2/11, DePillis) also have reports, while [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/11, story 8, 2:20, Holt) briefly mentioned the proposal in introducing a report on the collapse of “the main spillway in the nation’s highest dam,” Oroville Dam in California, one year ago, which forced the evacuation of nearly 200,000 people.

### **After Porter Resignation, Aides Say Trump Has Confidence In Kelly.**

The controversy over the White House handling of domestic abuse allegations against now-departed Staff Secretary Rob Porter continues to focus on Chief of Staff Kelly’s handling of the case. Three Administration spokespersons – Kellyanne Conway, OMB Director Mulvaney, and Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Short – appeared on Sunday morning political talk shows to

downplay talk that the President wants to replace Kelly, even as media continue to report that the President has begun weighing possible replacements.

On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/11, story 3, 2:35), Tom Llamas reported on "the backlash against President Trump after two White House staff members were let go after allegations of domestic abuse." ABC's David Wright reported that the President is "on the defensive for his lavishing of praise" on Porter. Trump: "He says he's innocent, and I think you have to remember that." Wright: "Today, one of Porter's exes, Jennie Willoughby, recounts her own anguished response to the President's remarks [in Time magazine](#): 'I was floored,' she writes, 'My friend turned to me and said, 'The President of the United States just called you a liar.'"

On the [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/11, story 4, 1:15, Morgan), Errol Barnett reported that the resignations of Porter and speechwriter David Sorensen, "and the White House's initial public support of Porter, have raised questions about whether John Kelly will continue on as chief of staff." Mulvaney said Sunday "that Kelly gave Porter the benefit of the doubt until he saw this image of Porter's ex-wife." Mulvaney: "As soon as it became apparent to us that the allegations were true, Rob Porter had to go." Barnett: "The President's adviser Kellyanne Conway denied Kelly's future at the White House is at risk." Conway: "He has full confidence in his current chief of staff, Gen. Kelly, and is not actively searching for a replacement."

Lester Holt reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/11, story 4, 2:10) that Conway, Mulvaney, and Short "defended the White House chief of staff today, voicing new confidence in John Kelly. At the same time, they tried to clarify a tweet from the President that caused more controversy this weekend." NBC's Kelly O'Donnell: "The President exacerbating outrage when [his Saturday tweet](#) complained about false allegations, leaving aides to do the clean-up." Conway: "He is sympathetic towards women and men who are victims of domestic violence."

The [AP](#) (2/11, Lemire) reports that the White House "was on the defensive Sunday, attempting to soften" the President's "comments about the mistreatment of women while rallying around the embattled chief of staff." Conway said on [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (2/11, Tapper), "One week ago, Rob Porter was a top aide to President Trump, and today he is out of the White House." Conway said on [ABC's This Week](#) (2/11), "I spoke to the President last night and he wants everyone to know he has full confidence in John Kelly and he's not looking for replacements. ... We take domestic abuse seriously."

Mulvaney said on [Fox News Sunday](#) (2/11, Wallace), "As soon as Rob Porter was proven wrong and it was proved that he was not telling the truth when the photos came on Wednesday, he was gone almost immediately." Mulvaney said on [CBS' Face The Nation](#) (2/11, Garrett) that it is a "natural human reaction" to "want to believe people you work with ... [Trump] has been let down by somebody he trusted, he put in place of authority, then wasn't told the truth."

Short said on [NBC's Meet The Press](#) (2/11, Todd) that while "Rob is a friend," there "can be no tolerance for domestic abuse, no tolerance for violence against women. ... When Gen. Kelly learned the depth of the nature of the accusations Tuesday night, by Wednesday morning, Rob Porter submitted his resignation." When asked why it took so long for Kelly to have that information, Short said, "I don't know who knew what at this point." [Townhall](#) (2/11, Meads) reports that Short said that "many in the White House considered Porter to be a friend and an outstanding worker." [USA Today](#) (2/11, Johnson, Berry) reports that Short "referred to Kelly as 'an American hero,'" telling NBC "that Trump had 'absolute confidence' in Kelly. He also dismissed accounts that Kelly had offered his resignation."

[Politico](#) (2/11, Guida) reports that all three officials said that Kelly "is not going anywhere." Corey Lewandowski said on [Fox News' MediaBuzz](#) (2/11), "John Kelly reports to one person and that's the President, and as long as the President continues to have confidence in John Kelly, John Kelly will remain in that position."

The [New York Times](#) (2/11, Baker, Haberman) reports that while the President is "said to be frustrated with Mr. Kelly over this and other issues," he "sought this weekend to tamp down talk that he would be pushed out. ... But other advisers to Mr. Trump maintained that his staff had let him down and that someone else should be held accountable." Kelly "privately told colleagues at the White House on Friday that he was willing to resign over his handling of Mr. Porter's case if Mr. Trump desired, but presidential aides said no resignation was formally offered or drafted." The Times reports that Trump has "informally sounded out associates about possible replacements," including Mulvaney and House Majority Leader McCarthy.

Contrary to the Times report, the [Washington Post](#) (2/11, Gearan) reports that Short told NBC that Kelly has not offered his resignation, saying, "John Kelly knows that he serves at the pleasure of the President, and he will step aside anytime the president doesn't want him to be there. But John Kelly has not offered his resignation." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/11, Ballhaus)



reports that Mulvaney said on CBS that he is not interested in the chief of staff position, though [McClatchy](#) (2/11, Duma, Kumar) reports that Mulvaney, who "has become one of the White House's most effective messengers," would be a top contender.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/11, King) writes that Trump "has pushed out a string of senior aides since taking office...and would like to replace" Kelly, "but Republican congressional leaders and strategists are strongly counseling him against feeding the perception of an inner circle in nonstop disarray," according to "a person close to the White House."

The [New York Times](#) (2/11, Fortin) writes that "since he became the Republican presidential nominee in 2016, Mr. Trump has defended several men accused of sexual misconduct, including himself." The Times writes that in addition to his comments about Porter, the President has defended Roger Ailes, Roy Moore, and Bill O'Reilly, as well as Lewandowski. Ed Henry said on [Fox News' MediaBuzz](#) (2/11), "How did Gen. Kelly, Hope Hicks, and Kellyanne Conway, who I believe were pictured in the Oval Office on Friday...where the President said this is a tough time for Rob Porter – he didn't mention any of the women. How did they allow him to get in front of the TV camera and say what he said without mentioning any of the women?"

Sen. Rand Paul said on [CBS' Face The Nation](#) (2/11, Garrett), "All I can say is, from looking from the outside in and not really knowing all of the facts, that obviously domestic violence should be condemned." He added, "It is sort of personnel thing that those of us on the outside don't know. There is absolutely no place for domestic violence in this world."

[The Hill](#) (2/11, Manchester) headlines its brief report "Trump Officials Do Damage Control After Staff Turmoil." [Reuters](#) (2/11, Chiacu) also covers the Sunday show comments.

***Gillibrand: Congress Should Hold Hearings On Sexual Misconduct Charges Against Trump.***

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand was interviewed on [CBS' 60 Minutes](#) (2/11) as part of a profile by CBS' Sharyn Alfonsi which focused on Gillibrand's efforts to combat sexual assault. Alfonsi said that Gillibrand has "called out" Trump "for a long history of alleged sexual misconduct." Gillibrand said, "I think he should resign, and if he's unwilling to do that, which is what I assume, then Congress should hold him accountable. We are obligated to have hearings." The [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/11, story 12, 1:35, Morgan) ran an excerpt, but it focused on Gillibrand's role in the resignation of Sen. Al Franken, not her remarks about the President. [The Hill](#) (2/11, Samuels) covers the interview.

***MSNBC Commentator Calls Trump "Commander In Chief Of American Rape Culture."*** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/11, Lim) reports that MSNBC political analyst Anand Girdharadas "slammed President Trump Sunday for being 'the commander in chief of American rape culture' after two White House aides resigned last week over allegations of domestic violence." Girdharadas said on [MSNBC's AM Joy](#) (2/11, Reid), "This is a rape culture presidency, and Donald Trump has become the commander in chief of American rape culture."

**Trump Laments Lack Of "Due Process" For Former Aides Who Are Accused Of Domestic Abuse.**

Following the resignation of two White House staffers facing accusations of domestic abuse, President Trump on Saturday [tweeted](#), "Peoples lives are being shattered and destroyed by a mere allegation. Some are true and some are false. Some are old and some are new. There is no recovery for someone falsely accused – life and career are gone. Is there no such thing any longer as Due Process?" Media coverage, which included heavy coverage on the network newscasts as well as in print and online, is nearly uniformly negative of Trump's remark, with many analyses placing it in context to prior allegations against him.

The [New York Times](#) (2/10, Landler) reports the President on Saturday "thrust himself into the national debate over sexual misconduct" with a tweet that "echoed Mr. Trump's dismissive response to allegations of sexual misconduct or abuse made over decades against male friends, colleagues and, above all, himself." The Times adds that "at a time when charges of sexual harassment and abuse are bringing down famous and powerful men from Hollywood to Washington, Mr. Trump's defiant stance put him at odds with much of the country, and served as a stark reminder of his own troubled history with women."

In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (2/10, A1, Gearan, Zezima) says Trump "appeared to side with men accused of domestic abuse or sexual misconduct, following a week of turmoil surrounding allegations of spousal abuse against two male aides that brought the national #MeToo movement inside the White House," particularly as his "sympathetic response...fits a pattern in which he has defended other men accused of harassment or abuse while casting doubt on accusers – including when allegations have been made against him." In another article, the [Washington Post](#) (2/10, Gearan) also mentions that the "response made no mention of accusers

or victims of sexual harassment or abuse, or the professional or personal harm that can come to those – usually women – who come forward.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/10, Miller) says the President “appeared to defend two high-ranking members of the administration ousted after allegations of domestic violence.” [Bloomberg News](#) (2/10, Sink) reports that “although Trump didn’t specify to whom he was referring, the tweet followed remarks the president made on Friday...about the departure of White House staff secretary Rob Porter, who resigned after two ex-wives and an ex-girlfriend came forward to detail allegations of physical abuse.” Bloomberg adds “the White House announced later on Friday that speechwriter David Sorensen, who worked at the Council on Environmental Quality, had resigned after administration officials learned his ex-wife had accused him of physical abuse. Sorensen, too, has denied that he physically harmed his former partner.” According to Bloomberg, “at a time when the #MeToo movement has arisen as a way to help demonstrate the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault against women in the workplace and beyond, Trump’s comments were the latest in which he’s appeared willing to offer support to men accused of sexual impropriety.”

The [AP](#) (2/10, Lemire) similarly says the tweet “appeared to take aim at the rising #MeToo movement about sexual abuse and echoed his own denials of sexual impropriety in the face of accusations from more than a dozen women.” [Politico](#) (2/9, Dove) reports that for “Trump, the allegations that his now-former staff secretary was a serial domestic abuser are another #HimToo moment” even though a FBI background check “found the allegations and restraining order credible enough to delay Rob Porter’s security clearance.” Politico adds “Trump has been down this road before – many times – starting with two dozen women who’ve alleged he sexual harassed or assaulted him. His ex-wife Ivana Trump claimed once in a deposition that he raped her, in a rage over bad hair plugs. She later said she didn’t mean ‘rape’ literally.”

In an article headlined “Tone Deaf? Trump Warns ‘Mere’ Abuse Allegation Can Shatter Lives,” [USA Today](#) (2/10, Stanglin) also acknowledges the President “has long cautioned against jumping to conclusions in cases of alleged sexual misconduct, including those directed at him by more than a dozen women.” USA Today highlights that Trump last year “also cautioned against rushing to judgment toward Roy Moore, the then-candidate for the Senate in Alabama who had been accused of molesting a 14-year-old girl and sexually assaulting another teenager.” In the lead [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/10, lead story, 3:00, Llamas) segment, David Wright similarly said the President “has never been even-handed on allegations of sexual misconduct, giving Republicans like Roy Moore the benefit of the doubt, but calling out Democrats like former Minnesota Sen. Al Franken.”

[The Hill](#) (2/10, Savransky) reports “critics of the president noted that Trump failed to mention either of Porter’s alleged victims in his statement. One of Porter’s ex-wives provided media outlets with photos of herself with bruises she said were inflicted by Porter.” In the lead [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/10, lead story, 1:40, Ninan) segment, Errol Barnett reported “Porter told White House counsel last January his background check for a security clearance might reveal unflattering information, and last November, Porter told Chief of Staff John Kelly his ex-wives were making accusations which he denied. But it wasn’t until Wednesday, when pictures surfaced of one of Porter’s ex-wives with a black eye, that the White House took action.”

The [AP](#) (2/10, Linderman) labels the White House’s response “as a high-profile illustration of the obstacles many women face in speaking out about their abuse. First and foremost: Will anyone believe them?” However, the AP concedes that Vice President Pence struck “a markedly different tone than Trump” in an MSNBC interview on Friday in stating that “there’s no tolerance in this White House and no place in America for domestic abuse.”

In a front-page article, the [New York Times](#) (2/10, A1, Martin, Burns) warns that the President’s “unceasing habit of making inflammatory and insensitive remarks,” as evidenced by his comments on Friday and Saturday, “could smother Republican momentum going into the midterm campaign.” According to the Times, Trump’s “seeming indifference to claims of abuse infuriated Republicans, who were already confronting a surge of activism from Democratic women driven to protest, raise money and run for office because of their fervent opposition” to the President. In an article about GOP polling, the [Washington Post](#) (2/10, Scott) highlights that Republican National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel “delivered senior White House staff a memo at the end of 2017 showing how poorly the GOP was doing with women.” According to the Post, “if Trump and his supporters do not make significant changes, GOP lawmakers who support Trump’s agenda may endure the wrath of American women who are fed up with the president.” [The Hill](#) (2/10, Greenwood) reports an RNC spokeswoman in an MSNBC appearance on Saturday also “delivered a firm denouncement of domestic violence...as the White House faces criticism over its handling of abuse allegations against a former aide.”

Meanwhile, [The Hill](#) (2/10, Thomsen) reports Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand [tweeted](#), "The President has shown through words and actions that he doesn't value women. It's not surprising that he doesn't believe survivors or understand the national conversation that is happening." She [added](#), "The lives of survivors of sexual assault and domestic abuse are being shattered every day. If he wants due process for the over dozen sexual assault allegations against him, let's have Congressional hearings tomorrow. I would support that and my colleagues should too." [The Hill](#) (2/10, Savransky) reports Sen. Patty Murray [tweeted](#), "Women's lives are upended every day by sexual violence and harassment. I'm going to keep standing with them, and trusting them, even if the President won't. – PM" [USA Today](#) (2/10, Berry) reports other "Democratic women in Congress," including Reps. Jackie Speier, Lois Frankel, and Robin Kelly, also took Trump to task "for defending those accused of abuse, but not mentioning the victims who have endured violence."

In her [New York Times](#) (2/10, Dowd) column, Maureen Dowd says that while Trump "slipped into the Oval Office through a wormhole of confusion about the American identity," the country is "now, thanks to our barmy president and his staff meltdown, we are finding out fast who we are and whom we don't want to be." Dowd asserts that Americans "don't want to countenance abusive behavior. And we certainly don't want men like Rob Porter who have punched, kicked, choked and terrorized their wives to be in the president's inner circle, helping decide which policies, including those that affect women, get emphasized." Dowd adds, "We don't want a president who bends over backward to give the benefit of the doubt to neo-Nazis, wife beaters, pedophiles and sexual predators – or who is a sexual predator himself. We don't want a president who thinks #me is more important than #metoo."

***White House In "Crisis Mode" Over Staff Resignations Tied To Domestic Abuse Allegations.*** [Politico](#) (2/9, Restuccia) reported the White House is in "full-scale crisis mode" over "fallout from revelations that chief of staff John Kelly failed to remove" staff secretary Rob Porter until after the allegations of domestic abuse were made public and as speechwriter David Sorensen also resigned "amid abuse allegations made by his ex-wife." Politico acknowledged the White House on Friday also "made a long-anticipated announcement about personnel moves in the West Wing," but "the list largely consisted of portfolio reassignments and title changes, doing little to allay concerns that Kelly has been unable to recruit fresh faces to replace senior officials who have left."

[Washington Post](#) (2/10, Balz) chief correspondent Dan Balz says that when Kelly replaced Reince Priebus as chief of staff, "he faced...the choice of managing down or managing up: bringing discipline to a chaotic and feuding staff operation or trying to tame an uncontrollable boss," but "it became evident" this week that Kelly has "done neither successfully." According to Balz, while "the White House under Kelly's guidance projected a far less flamboyant personality," the past few days have shown "the changeover to Kelly's regime appears to have instead substituted one set of problems for another." Balz states that "in the case of Porter, Kelly appears to have put his emphasis on competence and a smoothly running White House ahead of good judgment about how to deal with something as serious as domestic abuse."

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/10, story 5, 1:45, Holt), Kelly O'Donnell reported that although "Administration sources tell NBC News the President has been critical of Kelly's leadership," Priebus "said the President did not undercut Kelly when he spoke to him." Priebus: "The President's never complained to me about Gen. Kelly. And on top of it, I would never – number one, he didn't do that, but number two, I would never bring up such a subject."

[The Hill](#) (2/10, Bowden) reports Priebus in an interview with Hugh Hewitt on MSNBC that aired Saturday "denied a report in The [New York Times](#) this week that claimed President Trump phoned his former aide to complain about current chief of staff John Kelly." Priebus added, "I like John Kelly a lot. I think he's an American hero." [The Hill](#) (2/10, Delk) reports Priebus also said "he was taken aback this week by allegations of domestic abuse that forced the resignation of staff secretary Rob Porter" and he "said Porter seemed to be an upstanding member of the Trump White House." Priebus stated, "It was one of those sort of moments where people just said that 'you're kidding me.'" He added, "It can't, it can't, we're not talking about Rob Porter, are we? The Eagles scout, Rhodes scholar, Harvard undergrad?"

However, [The Hill](#) (2/10, Delk) "Briefing Room" blog reports that former White House communications director Anthony Scaramucci in an interview with CNN on Saturday challenged Kelly on his "handling of the Rob Porter scandal, saying 'the cover-up is always worse than the crime.'" Scaramucci asserted Kelly should have said that he "was going to give the guy a pass because he told me it wasn't true and I apologize to the American people for that. He's been let go and I'd still like to keep my job. That's what I would do if I was General Kelly."

Meanwhile, the [Washington Post](#) (2/9, Jordan, Dawsey) reported that White House

Communications Director Hope Hicks, the President's "right-hand woman," is also "suddenly frying under the spotlight of scandal, a central figure in two White House controversies – the Russian investigation and the departure of a senior White House aide accused of physically abusing two ex-wives." The Post highlighted that Hicks "has been dating Rob Porter, 40, who left his job Wednesday, and was involved in crafting the widely condemned initial White House defense of him." The Post said "until now, it was Hicks's quiet judgment that had been her most valuable currency in Trump's world," but her role in the controversy "is attracting so much unwanted attention that paparazzi are even following her." However, the Post conceded "it is a sign of her influence with Trump, and her unusual role in the West Wing, that no one is seriously talking about removing Hicks even as the turmoil is threatening Kelly's job." [ABC World News Tonight](#)'s (2/10, story 3, 0:45, Llamas) David Wright stated that while Hicks is "said to be in hot water," the President "released a statement saying, 'Hope is absolutely fantastic,' calling her 'smart, talented, and respected by all.'"

**WPost A1: Trump Benefits From White House Turmoil.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/10, A1, Fisher) reports on its front page that Trump began the week on a high note and "any other president would have seen this as a week to claim some credit," but "this is not your standard presidency, and that made a whack-a-mole day such as Friday nearly inevitable." The Post concedes that while "no one would argue that Friday's tumult was planned or desirable" and "by most historical standards, it was monumentally embarrassing," based on how "Trump operates, such days can be downright beneficial. The president learned at a very early age that what humiliates, damages, even destroys others can actually strengthen his image and therefore his bottom line." The Post contends that "as yet another chief of staff twists in the wind, the president makes clear two essential points about how he governs:" 1) "always double down on your position," and 2) "The president must always be the focus of attention."

### **Trump Signs Spending Bill, Ending Brief Overnight Shutdown.**

The [New York Times](#) (2/9, Kaplan) reports "President Trump on Friday morning signed into law a far-reaching budget deal that will boost spending by hundreds of billions of dollars and allow the federal government to reopen after a brief shutdown." The [Washington Post](#) (2/9, Debonis, Werner) reports that after signing the bill, Trump [tweeted](#), "Just signed Bill. Our Military will now be stronger than ever before. We love and need our Military and gave them everything – and more. First time this has happened in a long time. Also means JOBS, JOBS, JOBS!"

[The Hill](#) (2/9, Easley) reports the President [continued](#), "Without more Republicans in Congress, we were forced to increase spending on things we do not like or want in order to finally, after many years of depletion, take care of our Military. Sadly, we needed some Dem votes for passage. Must elect more Republicans in 2018 Election!" He [added](#), "Costs on non-military lines will never come down if we do not elect more Republicans in the 2018 Election, and beyond. This Bill is a BIG VICTORY for our Military, but much waste in order to get Dem votes. Fortunately, DACA not included in this Bill, negotiations to start now!"

However, in a brief report, the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/9, story 3, 0:25, Glor) warned "the specifics of the final plan will have to be worked out within about six weeks or the country could face another government shutdown." Meanwhile, in a brief report, [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/9, story 4, 0:20, Holt) cautioned the spending bill "is set to balloon the deficit over a trillion dollars."

**NYTimes, WPost Analyses: Fiscal Conservatives Are Losers In Passage Of Senate Spending Package.** The [New York Times](#) (2/9, Hulse) reports Republicans appear to have drifted away from "Tea Party-driven fiscal restraint," pointing to large budget items in the Senate's spending package. While the party "might earn a bit of gratitude from voters who support a beefed-up Pentagon budget and see some helpful federal investment in their own backyards" as a result, the Times warns that it "may also pay a price at the hands of fiscal conservatives who believe that party leaders have fallen back into bad habits and betrayed bedrock beliefs." The [Washington Post](#) (2/9, Sullivan, Lee) reports the plan "came under immediate attack from five Koch-backed groups" criticizing its "irresponsible spending levels" and debt limit suspension. Similarly, Senator Rand Paul "took advantage of Senate rules to delay a vote on the budget bill until early Friday morning" in protest.

**NYTimes, WPost Analyses Warn Excess Government Spending May Leave US Unable To Cope With Next Recession.** In a front-page analysis, the [New York Times](#) (2/9, A1, Irwin) suggests the "era of fiscal austerity is over," giving way to deficit spending and "some of the strongest economic growth the country has experienced in years." However, the Times warns that the increased spending trend can lead to higher inflation and interest rates in the medium term, and may leave the US "with less flexibility to combat the next recession or unexpected crisis" in the

long term. In a similar analysis, the [Washington Post](#) (2/9, Van Dam) explains that "Congress is spending as if the country were in a recession" during "a time when the economy is doing well enough that deficits should be small or even nonexistent." What's more, the deficit-to-GDP ratio could grow rapidly if the economy stops growing. The Post similarly concludes that excess spending may leave Congress with less room "to pass another stimulus package when the next recession inevitably arrives." In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (2/9, A1, Long, Stein) the deal signals an end to the "era of spending restraint" in Washington, pumping "more than \$500 billion in additional money into domestic agencies and the Pentagon over two years, the biggest increase in spending in almost a decade." The Post adds that "the nonpartisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget projects that the United States will have a \$1 trillion budget deficit by next year...and that it will probably last for years."

**Sen. Paul Criticizes Senate Spending Package.** Sen. Rand Paul writes in a [TIME](#) (2/9, Paul) op-ed about his late-night stand against the Senate spending proposal, accusing both parties of entering into a "massive and destructive bargain" that will add to "our already out-of-control debt." Noting the angry response to his delay of the vote, Paul argues that "nothing seems to matter "in the Senate" except the will of a small circle of Big Government, free-spending leaders who demand silence and 'take it or leave it' votes." He adds, "I hope this causes fiscal conservatives across the country to pay careful attention to this Congress. To not accept just anything because it comes from a GOP Congress."

**Rattner: Massive Budget Deficit Makes No Sense During Economic Recovery.** In a [New York Times](#) (2/9, Rattner) op-ed, financier Steven Rattner, an adviser to the Obama Administration, argues that the "staggering" US budget deficit "make[s] no sense" amid the country's economic recovery, and is "contributing to higher interest rates and the shakiness in the stock market." Rattner goes on to blame Republicans "for what is likely to be \$15 trillion of added debt over the next 10 years," and warns that the deficit-to-GDP ratio "could reach a record 109 percent by 2027, exceeding even post-World War II levels."

### **Not Considering Climate In Infrastructure Plan Could Be Costly, Analysts Warn.**

The [New York Times](#) (2/10, Davenport) says that while President Trump's infrastructure plan represents one of his main legislative ambitions, the proposal "could directly clash with one of its defining regulatory principles, which is to question the risk from global warming and roll back regulations addressing climate change." A 2017 EPA report says that up to \$280 billion may be needed "to adapt the nation's roads and railways to the effects of a warming climate." Arizona State University Professor Michael Kubly is quoted saying, "The impact of not considering climate change when planning infrastructure means you end up building the wrong thing, in the wrong place, to the wrong standards." A White House spokeswoman who asked to remain anonymous "declined to discuss whether climate-change reports were considered in the preparation of Mr. Trump's blueprint," but she said, "The president's team spent almost a full year formulating his infrastructure plan and all relevant scientific data was considered."

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

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### **New York Times.**

**"The Dangerous Illusion Of Missile Defense."** The [New York Times](#) (2/11) argues in an editorial that although "the nation's ballistic missile defense program remains riddled with flaws, even as the threat from North Korean missiles escalates," the President has "persuaded Congress to increase spending for the program to \$14 billion, from \$10 billion, in the 2018 budget." The Times says Trump "is overselling the program," and he "would be better off making sure that major powers keep enforcing tough sanctions on North Korea, that South Korea and Japan are prepared for any military action, that North Korea's avenues for exporting nuclear technology are blocked and that America is ready to test any opening to engage North Korea in negotiations."

**"The Problem With Parole."** The [New York Times](#) (2/11) editorializes that New York, "a national leader in reducing its prison population, could do much more to reform its parole and probation systems." The state "is a national standout when it comes to sentencing reform," but "a new study from Columbia University's Justice Lab calls on state lawmakers to do significantly more to address the problems with the community supervision system, which come at a considerable cost to the local jails where most of the people locked up for state parole violations are held." The Times argues that proposals in the study "make good policy and economic sense, and would bring the state to the forefront of the parole reform movement."



## Washington Post.

*"The Next Pandemic Will Come Sooner Or Later. The CDC Needs Money To Prepare."* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/11) urges Congress not to let the CDC's effort "to help countries prevent infectious-disease threats from turning into epidemics" lapse. The Post says that "if the resources are available, this program merits a claim on them." Another pandemic will occur, the Post argues, and the US "should not wait for the winds and waters to carry it here; far better to be prepared and vigilant abroad, and to fully underwrite the CDC's ability to do so."

*"The Supreme Court Is About To Hear The Biggest Labor Case Of The Century."* A [Washington Post](#) (2/11) editorial says that in two weeks, the Supreme Court will hear arguments "in the most important labor case of the 21st century to date, Janus v. AFSCME." At issue "are rules in 22 states requiring public employees to pay 'agency fees' to cover the collective-bargaining costs of unions that represent them, even if the employees are not members of the union." The Post adds that "if the court voids those laws, public-sector unions and the (usually Democratic) politicians they support could suffer a big financial hit." The Post admits to "misgivings about the costs and inefficiency public-sector unions sometimes create," but argues that the court "should not take the drastic step of overturning established precedent," and urges instead "a middle way" that "could preserve precedent while addressing employees' legitimate concerns about involuntarily funding political causes."

*"A Trump UN Nominee Would Be An Embarrassment To The United States."* The [Washington Post](#) (2/11) editorializes against President Trump's nomination of Ken Isaacs to lead the United Nations' International Organization for Migration (IOM). Citing a Post report, the editorial says Isaacs "peppered his Twitter account with ignorant, prejudiced and incendiary comments," and says the account went dark soon after the report appeared. The Post contrasts Issacs' "unsuitability" with "the man he would succeed at the helm of IOM: William Lacy Swing, a deeply respected and experienced diplomat who served as U.S. ambassador in six postings," and argues that Isaacs succeeding Swing would be "an embarrassment to the United States."

## Wall Street Journal.

*"The Pyongyang Olympics."* A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/11) editorial argues that North Korea is the big winner at the Olympic Games after Kim's sister met with Moon. Moon, the Journal says, is to blame for Pyongyang's public relations coup. At the same time, the Journal praises Pence for meeting with North Korean defectors during his visit.

*"Release The FISA Documents."* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/11) urges the White House to release the Democratic memo, saying that failing to do so furthers Democrats' argument that Republicans are being partisan in what they allow the public to see on the issue. The Journal also calls for the declassification of all records that the members of House Intelligence Committee relied on to put together the competing memos – including the complete FBI applications for wiretap orders from the FISA court – saying that doing so will allow the public to determine which side is more accurate in their claims.

*"The Anthem Class-Action Con."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/11) editorializes about a class-action lawsuit against insurance company Anthem. For law firms last year negotiated a \$115 million settlement with Anthem to cover a 2015 data breach that reportedly compromised 79 million birth dates, Social Security numbers, addresses, and income information, and yet only \$51 million would go to victims, an average of 65 cents per class member, while the law firms would get \$63.6 million. US District Judge Lucy Koh criticized the four leading law firms for farming out much of the work and charging too many billable hours in the case. The Journal sees the case as another example of abuse of the civil litigation process by plaintiffs attorneys.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

#### *Wall Street Journal:*

[Investors Brace For More Market Turbulence After Rocky Week](#)  
[Tension Rises Between Israel And Iran After Syria Clash](#)  
[New Tax Law Haunts Companies That Did 'Inversion' Deals](#)  
[China Leads Global Battery Race](#)

#### *New York Times:*

[Abuse Claims Against Aide Further Roil White House](#)  
[Pelosi Wants To Win House, But Can She Corral Democrats?](#)  
[With Gaza In Financial Crisis, Fears Of A Total Collapse](#)  
[Conspiracy Suit Over Charlottesville Assails Alt-Right Leaders](#)  
[South Korea Got the Winter Games. Then It Needed More Olympians](#)  
[F.D.A. Chief, Unlike Other Trump Picks, Wins Over Critics](#)

***Washington Post:***

[Supervising Heroin Highs](#)  
[ICE's Wide Net Boosts Arrests](#)  
[Trump To Drop Goal Of Balanced Budget](#)  
[EPA Chief's Trips More Costly, Less Publicized](#)  
[No Hockey Tradition? South Korea Imports Talent.](#)

***Financial Times:***

[Israel Says It Dealt 'Severe Blows' To Syrian And Iranian Forces](#)  
[Bridgewater Investment Chief Sees New Era Of Volatility](#)  
[Dr Pepper Snapple Deal Puts Focus On Distribution Networks](#)  
[Seoul Seeks To Ease US Concerns About Korean Detente](#)

***Washington Times:***

[Trump's Veto Threats Shape Senate Debate On Immigration](#)  
[Sensitive Information In Democrats' Memo Puts Trump In 'No-Win Situation,' Republicans Say](#)  
[Maryland Eyes Law That Would Effectively Ban Tackle Football For Young Athletes](#)  
[Trump Election Predictor Sees Grounds For Impeachment, But Not Politics](#)  
[No Pushover: Meghan McCain Brings Conservative Voice To "The View," And Ratings Rise](#)  
[Opposition To Same-Sex Marriage Boosts Presidential Candidate In Costa Rica](#)

***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash; Russia Plane Crash; White House Staffers; WH-Infrastructure; Ohio Police Shooting; Severe Weather; Catholic School Teacher Firing; Winter Olympics; Flu Epidemic; Weinstein Sex Allegations; Kentucky Murder Spree; Correction Officer Attack; Truck Explosion; Olympic Hockey Players.

**CBS:** Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash; Russia Plane Crash; Winter Olympics; White House Staffers; House Intelligence Committee Memo; WH-Infrastructure; Ohio Police Shooting; Opioid Epidemic; Bike Race Crash; Severe Weather; Mardi Gras; Gillibrand Interview; New Space Race; Hospital Charity.

**NBC:** Weinstein Sex Allegations; Russia Plane Crash; Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash; White House Staffers; Iran Anti-Gov Protests; Winter Olympics; South Korea Technology; Oroville Dam-US Infrastructure; Olympic Figure Skater; Olympic Hockey Players.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

Winter Olympics – 6 minutes, 10 seconds  
White House Staffers – 6 minutes  
Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash – 5 minutes, 5 seconds  
Russia Plane Crash – 5 minutes  
Infrastructure Plan – 3 minutes, 15 seconds

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Weinstein Sex Allegations; WH-Budget Plan; Puerto Rico-Black Out; Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash.

**CBS:** WH-Budget Plan; White House Staffers; Russia Plane Crash; Puerto Rico-Black Out; Severe Weather; Winter Olympics.

**FOX:** Immigration Deal; WH-Budget Plan; Ohio Police Shooting; Weinstein Sex Allegations.

**NPR:** Immigration Deal; Trump-Middle East Comment; Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash; Russia Plane Crash.

## **Washington Schedule**

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**Today's Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Hosts a meeting with state and local officials about his infrastructure initiative; meets with Vice President Mike Pence; has lunch with Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos.

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — Meets with the President; has lunch with the President and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos.

**US Senate:** 2:00 PM Senate Committee on Indian Affairs listening session on 'Addressing Gaps in Protections and Services for Native Women' Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 628, Washington, DC <http://indian.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/IndianCommittee>

5:00 PM Senate Foreign Relations Committee top secret briefing on the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act – Closed / Top Secret / Sensitive Compartmented Information briefing on 'Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act', given by Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs A. Wess Mitchell; and Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Christopher Ford Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC-217, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 5:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on 'H.R. 3978, the TRID Improvement Act of 2017', 'H.R. 3299, the Protecting Consumers' Access to Credit Act of 2017', and 'H.R. 620, the ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017' Location: U.S. Capitol, H-313, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps> No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives.

**Other:** 8:00 AM Wreath-laying and observances at the Lincoln Memorial to mark Abraham Lincoln's birthday – U.S. Armed Forces conduct Presidential Full Honor Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial in honor of Abraham Lincoln, to mark the 209th anniversary of his birth (8:00 AM EST) \* Later, the National Park Service and the Lincoln Birthday National Commemorative Committee host ceremony with welcome remarks from National Mall and Memorial Parks Acting Superintendent Karen Cucurillo and keynote from Lincoln Memorial University Duncan School of Law Dean Gary Wade. Includes presentation of the Frederick Talley Drum Hunt History Award to Jimmy Diamondidis and Aidan Wang of the Severn School in Severna Park, MD by the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, music from the U.S. Marine Band quintet and the Lincoln Memorial University Select Quartet, and wreaths presented by the Diplomatic Corps (represented by the Embassy of Palau), the Interior Department, District of Columbia, Lincoln Birthday National Commemorative Committee, the Military District of Washington DC., and others (12:00 PM EST) Location: Lincoln Memorial, 2 Lincoln Memorial Cir NW, Washington, DC <http://mdwhome.mdw.army.mil/> [https://twitter.com/MDW\\_USARMY](https://twitter.com/MDW_USARMY)

8:00 AM Portraits of Barack and Michelle Obama unveiled at Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery – Portraits of former President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama unveiled at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. Ceremony attended by the Obamas with Smithsonian Institution Secretary Dr David Skorton, Gallery Director Kim Sajet, and artists Amy Sherald and Kehinde Wiley. The portraits have been commissioned by the Gallery, with Wiley selected to create President Obama's portrait, and Sherald that of Michelle. The portraits will go on view to the public tomorrow, with Wiley's work permanently installed in the 'America's Presidents' exhibition, and Sherald's in the museum's Recent Acquisitions corridor, through early November 2018 Location: National Portrait Gallery, 8th and F Sts NW, Washington, DC <http://www.npg.si.edu/> <https://twitter.com/npg>

10:00 AM Brookings discussion on 'The Trump Administration's Nuclear Posture Review: Continuity and change' – 'The Trump Administration's Nuclear Posture Review: Continuity and change' Brookings Institution discussion on the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), featuring keynote remarks by Department of Defense Deputy Under Secretary for Policy David Trachtenberg. Panelists include Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Nuclear Policy Program Co-Director James Acton, Brookings Institution Foreign Policy Senior Fellow Robert Einhorn, former National Nuclear Security Administration Principal Deputy Administrator Madelyn Creedon, and Adaptive Strategies President Jim Miller Location: The Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.brookings.edu> <https://twitter.com/BrookingsInst>

12:00 PM CAP discussion on 'Election Security in 50 States: Defending America's Elections' – 'Election Security in 50 States: Defending America's Elections' Center for American Progress discussion, with speakers including Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar, former Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson, Colorado Director of Elections Judd Choate, and former Virginia Commissioner of Elections Edgardo Cortes Location: Center for American Progress, 1333 H St NW, Washington, DC [www.americanprogress.org](http://www.americanprogress.org) <https://twitter.com/amprog>



2:00 PM Dem Rep. Adam Smith speaks at CSIS report launch – ‘Oversight and Accountability in U.S. Security Sector Assistance: Seeking Return on Investment’ Center for Strategic and International Studies Security Program report launch. Speakers include Democratic Rep. Adam Smith, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Security Cooperation Gregory Pollock, and U.S. Southern Command J5 Strategy, Policy and Plans Director Brigadier General Antonio Fletcher Location: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.csis.org> <https://twitter.com/CSIS>

3:00 PM Senate holds procedural vote on immigration legislation – Senate convenes and resumes consideration of the motion to proceed to ‘H.R.2579’ – a legislative vehicle for immigration legislation, including a vote on a motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed \* Follows recent commitment made by the Republican leadership to their Democratic counterparts to address immigration policy and other pressing legislative matters in the coming weeks, in exchange for their support on govt funding legislation Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

AG Sessions addresses National Sheriffs’ Association – National Sheriffs’ Association Winter Legislative and Technology Conference. Day three includes remarks from Attorney General Jeff Sessions, on law enforcement efforts to combat the opioid crisis and violent crime Location: JW Marriott Washington, DC, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.sheriffs.org/> <https://twitter.com/NationalSheriff>

National Congress of American Indians 2018 State of Indian Nations Address – National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) 2018 State of Indian Nations Address, delivered by National Congress of American Indians President Jefferson Keel Location: Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.ncai.org/> <https://twitter.com/NCAI1944>

National Congress of American Indians Executive Council Winter Session – National Congress of American Indians 2018 Executive Council Winter Session (aka Tribal Nations Legislative Summit). Speakers include Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson, Secretary of Veteran Affairs David Shulkin, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, bipartisan Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto, Lisa Murkowski, Tom Udall, Heidi Heitkamp, and Jeff Merkley, bipartisan Reps. Jack Bergman, Steve Pearce, Don Young, Norma Torres, Tom O’Halloran, and Derrick Kilmer, and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein Location: Capital Hilton, Washington, DC <http://www.ncai.org/> <https://twitter.com/NCAI1944>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

No late-night talk show aired on Sunday night.

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**From:** Todd Wynn  
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**Subject:** Updated invitation: WEA DOI Discussion @ Tue Feb 13, 2018 3:30pm - 4pm (EST) (susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov)  
**Date:** Friday, February 09, 2018 3:52:02 PM  
**Attachments:** [invite.ics](#)

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**This event has been changed.**

**Changed: WEA DOI Discussion**

[more details »](#)

**When** Tue Feb 13, 2018 3:30pm – 4pm Eastern Time

**Where** Conference room 6023 ([map](#))

**Video call** (b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov

**Who**

- [todd\\_wynn@ios.doi.gov](mailto:todd_wynn@ios.doi.gov) - organizer
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- [ksgamma@westernenergyalliance.org](mailto:ksgamma@westernenergyalliance.org)

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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- Federal Times: Drones That Are DoD Castoffs.
- Washington Post: Understaffing, Lack Of Training At Agencies Hampering Agency Services To Public,

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- Kingman (AZ) Daily Miner: Reducing Burro Population Goal Of BLM Pilot Vaccination Program.
- Law360: ND Asks 10th Circ. To Keep Fracking Rule Rejection In Place.
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- WHYY-TV Philadelphia: Conservationists Acquire 477 Acres For Cape May Wildlife Refuge.
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## DOI In The News

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### Secretary Zinke In Utah Friday For Conservation Announcement.

The [AP](#) (2/8) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke plans to visit Utah Friday for a "a major conservation announcement" during a conservation and hunting expo in Salt Lake City. Meanwhile, "protests are planned by environmental groups who are upset that Zinke recommended shrinking two sprawling national monuments in Utah."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/8, O'Donoghue) and [KSL-TV](#) Salt Lake City (2/8, O'Donoghue).

### Governors Say Interior Department Shift Didn't Include Them.

The [AP](#) (2/8, Elliott) reports that "a bipartisan group of 19 Western governors said Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke did not consult with them about major plans for reorganizing the agency, and have asked him to delay implementing the proposal until he speaks with them." In a letter sent Feb. 1, the Western Governors Association "said the group had asked Zinke in April 2017 to be consulted on any reshuffling of the department, which wields considerable authority over public lands in the West." However, "they said last week that Zinke has still not sought the views of its members, who represent every state in the western half of the nation, from Texas to Hawaii."

[The Hill](#) (2/8, Delk) reports that the association's executive director Jim Ogsbury said, "Western governors expect to be treated as the chief executives of a sovereign level of government, not as stakeholders." Interior Department spokeswoman Heather said the governors "are welcome to share their ideas and opinions with the secretary or their staff are also encouraged to reach out to the secretary's staff."

### Trump Administration Plan Would Roll Back Environmental Reviews Covering Use Of Public Lands.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/8, Eilperin, Laris) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has finalized a package of recommendations that would change the permitting process on public lands "by streamlining environmental reviews." A Sept. 27 report obtained by the Post outlines how the Trump Administration "plans to expedite extractive activities" on public lands. The recommendations seek to "eliminate lengthy federal reviews in many instances through 'categorical exclusions' if officials determine the activities have no environmental impact."

### **California Officials, Protesters Fight Offshore Drill Plans.**

The [AP](#) (2/9, Cooper) reports demonstrators that numbered in the hundreds "converged on the California state capitol in Sacramento Thursday voicing their opposition to a Trump administration plan to expand offshore drilling." The protests came ahead of a public hearing scheduled for the same day hosted by the US Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. The [San Jose \(CA\) Mercury News](#) (2/8, Krieger) reports demonstrators at the state capitol "carried large inflatable turtles and whales and waved placards saying 'Drills = Spills' and 'Oil Money Out.'" Protesters were joined by California state legislators and effectively turned the gathering into "a Peoples Town Hall," with demonstrators "speaking into megaphones and rallying around...environmental leaders like Charles Lester, former director of the California Coastal Commission." Additional coverage was provided by [Reuters](#) (2/8, Bernstein) and the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/8, Hart).

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/9, Gutierrez) reports Californians who attended a BOEM public hearing in Sacramento on Thursday "left...in anger and disbelief that there was no microphone or panel of federal officials to listen to their concerns. Instead, the public hearing by the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management took the format of an open house consisting of science-fair type displays – including one labeled 'Why is Oil Important.'" The hearing "began as a polite and quiet gathering" at the Sacramento public library, but "[t]he peace didn't last long" as the attendees began to chant in favor of a hearing. Kacey Bridgeman, who attended the hearing said, "I expected someone to be listening to what the people have to say about offshore oil drilling. This is ridiculous." Citizens for Responsible Oil and Gas board member Robin Gerber said, "This is a sham. ... We know (Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke) and his boss Trump are determined to hand over our oceans to the oil companies for profit."

The [AP](#) (2/8) reports members of the California Assembly "overwhelmingly passed a resolution opposing the Trump administration's push to renew oil drilling off the Pacific coast." The vote of 55-8 "came on the same day as the only federal hearing in California on the plan."

***Coastal Commission On Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan: Ain't Gonna Happen.*** The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/8, Xia) reports the California Coastal Commission "flexed its own authority" after signing off on a letter this week "urging the Trump administration to back away from some of the nation's most pristine coastlines." The letter comes after the "California State Lands Commission...also sent a letter this week...declaring that the commission will not approve the construction of new pipelines – the most economical way of transporting oil and gas from offshore rigs to land." Coastal Commission Deputy Director of Energy, Oceans and Federal Consistency Alison Dettmer believes that "[t]hese public stands – even if they don't change the mind of the Trump administration – send a strong message to the oil industry. ... It's important to let oil companies know that even if the federal government makes a lease available, 'you've got local governments along the coastline, you've got state government agencies and the governor's office saying, 'we don't want you here... it's going to be expensive, you're going to be stuck in litigation.'"

***California Just Gave Coastal States A Blueprint To Block Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan.*** [CNBC](#) (2/8, DiChristopher) reports the stated refusal of the California State Lands Commission "to issue permits for infrastructure that drillers need to bring oil and gas from offshore fields to land" may eventually "serve as a blueprint for the governors and congressional delegations of coastal states, who are overwhelmingly united in bipartisan opposition to Trump's plan to open nearly all of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf to oil and gas development." [UPI](#) (2/8, Graeber) reports Greenpeace issued a call on other US coastal governors "to follow California's example and take similar actions to block the use of pipelines for oil from new offshore drilling," according to a statement from Greenpeace campaigner Vicky Wyatt.

***Offshore Drilling Hearing Remains In Albany, Despite Pleas To Move To LI.*** The [Riverhead \(NY\) Local](#) (2/8, Civiletti) reports that local officials in New York are frustrated that the only public hearing scheduled by the feds on the offshore drilling plan is set for February 15 in Albany and have requested that the hearing be moved to Long Island. "Hosting a public forum in a landlocked city three hours away from the shoreline of New York will make it more difficult for members of the public who have an interest in coastal waters in their backyards to attend," Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine wrote in a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

**DEP Head Formally Opposes Offshore Drilling In Florida.** [Florida Politics](#) (2/8, Rosica) reports that Florida's Secretary of Environmental Protection, Noah Valenstein, sent a letter to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management asserting the state's opposition to any exploratory drilling for oil and gas off the state's coast. The move comes after Florida Gov. Rick Scott already received a "commitment from (U.S.) Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to take Florida off the table for future consideration for offshore oil drilling."

**Southwest Florida Closely Watching Offshore Drilling Discussion.** [WINK-TV](#) Fort Myers, FL (2/8) reports that locals in Southwest Florida are closely monitoring the offshore drilling discussion. Harry Julian, a charter boat company owner, supports the plan because he said his time driving boats for oil rigs in Louisiana made him realize how safe drilling can be if done properly. "I think for us to say not in my backyard is a little hypocritical," said Julian, also noting that it takes fuel to run his boats. Other proponents point to the quality of jobs that the oil industry would bring. According to the American Petroleum Institute, an expansion of offshore drilling would add 3.2 billion to Florida's economy and create 85,000 jobs by 2035.

## **2 Trade Shows, 2 Portraits Of The American Conservation Movement.**

[NPR](#) (2/8, Hood, Hersher) reports that two different trade shows held in two cities "offered a portrait of a complex and divided American conservation movement." The article contrasts the attendees of the Outdoor Retailer and Snow Show in Denver, Colo., with those at the National Rifle Association's Great American Outdoor Show in Pennsylvania. While hikers and hunters are two constituents in "a divided conservation movement," the article notes that "recent polls suggest some middle ground when it comes to conservation and environmental issues." The 2018 Conservation In the West Poll "shows a growing number of Republicans and Democrats in the West over the last two years see themselves as conservationists."

## **Drones That Are DoD Castoffs.**

The [Federal Times](#) (2/8, Bur) reports that the Interior Department's drone are "offering the rare option of reducing costs and increasing safety of personnel," according to Mark Bathrick, director of the Office of Aviation Services. The Interior Department's "entire fleet of drones costs less than a single one of its manned aircraft, and many of the drones are hand-me-downs from the Department of Defense." Yet, "thanks to the drones, jobs like dam inspections and wildlife surveys take one-seventh the amount of time to accomplish at one-tenth the cost. "

## **Understaffing, Lack Of Training At Agencies Hampering Agency Services To Public, Personnel Agency Says.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/8, Yoder) reports that the initial Federal Workforce Priorities Report from the Office of Personnel Management says employee shortages "are hampering a range of services to the public and stressing the federal workforce." The report, which "comes just ahead of a White House budget proposal that is expected to include plans for carrying out a long-term reduction in the federal workforce, as ordered by the Trump administration last April," found "personnel issues factored in 59 percent of programs on the Government Accountability Office's 'high-risk' list and in 38 percent of reports by inspectors general of 'management challenges' within their agencies."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Warner, Kaine, Wittman Request Briefing With Bureau Of Indian Affairs For Newly Recognized Federal Tribes.**

The [Augusta \(VA\) Free Press](#) (2/8) reports that Sens. Mark R. Warner and Tim Kaine, and Rep. Rob Wittman "requested that Bureau of Indian Affairs schedule a briefing as soon as possible with six newly federally recognized tribes in Virginia so that they can fully understand what benefits and resources will now be available to them after a successful, decades-long effort to secure federal recognition." In a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, they wrote, "As new federally recognized tribes, the Chickahominy, the Chickahominy – Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi, the Rappahannock, the Monacan, and the Nansemond, have a right to understand all the benefits and resources that are available to them under this designation."

### **Santa Fe Man Gets Prison Sentence For Assaulting BIA Officer.**

The [AP](#) (2/8) reports that "a Santa Fe man has been sentenced to 30 months in prison in New



Mexico for assaulting a federal law enforcement officer." Jordan Roybal, 26, was sentenced Thursday in federal court in Albuquerque. Roybal was "arrested last March on a criminal complaint charging him with assaulting a Bureau of Indian Affairs officer in November 2016 in Santa Fe County."

### **Campaign Aims To End Disenrollment In Tribes: 'People Have To Belong'.**

[KUOW-FM](#) Seattle (2/8, Fox) reports that the #stopdisenrollment campaign, "aimed at getting Native American tribes to stop kicking out members," was re-launched yesterday. According to the article, "roughly 80 federally recognized tribes in the US have disenrolled members, usually citing reasons such as criminal activity, an error in enrollment, or not having enough native blood."

## **Bureau Of Indian Education**

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### **Interior Department Official Retains Six-figure Salary During 16-Month Leave After Rape Allegations From Employees.**

[Raw Story](#) (2/8, AL-SIBAI), drawing on coverage by [Government Executive](#) (2/8, Katz), reports that "an official with the Interior Department's Indian Education bureau retains a six-figure salary despite being on administrative leave for over a year for allegedly raping at least two employee." Eric Christensen, "the erstwhile vice president of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute community college in Albuquerque, New Mexico, has been accused of raping and harassing multiple female employees." Christensen has denied the allegations, saying "there's a big difference between verbal abuse and rape."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Feds Cancel Move To Restrict Mining In California Desert.**

The [AP](#) (2/8) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has "scrapped Obama-era plans to exclude 1.3 million acres of environmentally sensitive Southern California lands from new mining activity." The bureau "announced Tuesday that after a review it concluded that mining operations do not pose a significant threat to the protection of cultural, biological and scientific resources." The BLM "also said an environmental analysis associated with the proposed withdrawal has been terminated."

### **In Rural New Mexico, Ranchers Wage Their Battle Through The Courts.**

[NPR](#) (2/8, Siegler) reports that ranchers across the West closely watched the prosecution of the Bundy family "for leading armed militia standoffs over cattle grazing on public land." Last month, the case was dropped and "now they're calling on other cattlemen to defy federal grazing rules and regulations." The article says that "the question now is whether – or if – that will resonate among scores of other ranchers who rely on federal public land to graze their cattle."

### **Memorial Seeks To Reduce Wild Horse Herds.**

The [Taos \(NM\) News](#) (2/8) reports that "a Senate Joint Memorial wants the U.S. Department of Interior to better manage a growing wild horse population even if that means euthanasia and unrestricted sales to people who might haul the animals off to meat-packing plants in Mexico." The memorial asks the federal government to "follow the federal Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and utilize all of the management tools provided in that act, including unrestricted sales and euthanasia, to achieve ecologically sustainable wild horse and burro populations. Additionally, this memorial encourages Congress to restore funding to that department to facilitate those activities."

### **Reducing Burro Population Goal Of BLM Pilot Vaccination Program.**

The [Kingman \(AZ\) Daily Miner](#) (2/8, Smith) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has "been baiting and trapping female burros, or 'jennies,' in the Black Mountain area since August in a pilot program with the Humane Society of the United States aimed at reducing the wild burro population." According to Adam Eggers, spokesman for the BLM in Phoenix, "female burros are being inoculated with an immunocontraceptive vaccine known as Porcine Zona Pellucida, or PZP." He said, "Once we get the animals into the corral, we check their health and well-being and we



check their gender, and for jennies, they get the PZP and usually within 24 hours they're back on the range."

### **ND Asks 10th Circ. To Keep Fracking Rule Rejection In Place.**

[Law360](#) (2/8, Phillis) reports that "North Dakota said on Wednesday that new developments support its argument that the Tenth Circuit should keep in place a lower court's determination that the government did not have the power to apply an Obama-era fracking rule to tribal and federal land." The state's reply brief argued "the Tenth Circuit should leave in place a 2016 decision by a Wyoming federal judge that said the U.S. Bureau of Land Management lacked authority to issue an Obama-era rule strengthening fracking regulations."

### **Exploratory Mining Approved At Area Near Mount St. Helens.**

The [Clark County \(WA\) Columbian](#) (2/8, Pesanti) reports that the U.S. Forest Service has "given its consent to allow exploratory mining near Mount St. Helens." Ascot USA Inc. is seeking "to explore for minerals in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest about 12 miles northeast of Mount St. Helens and adjacent to and extending northeast from the boundary of the National Volcanic Monument." On Tuesday, the Forest Service "released a final decision to consent to the Bureau of Land Management to give prospecting permit applications to Ascot."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/9).

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **BOR's Mikkelsen Talks Drought Survival.**

The [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/9, Dillemoth) reports that Alan Mikkelsen, deputy commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation, "spent his sixth visit to the Klamath Basin this week touring sites, such as the Klamath Tribes Research Station and hatchery in Sprague River, and meeting with tribal representatives and lower and upper basin irrigators." Mikkelsen came to Klamath Falls on Tuesday "with a full schedule packed with meetings; among them with the Klamath Water Users Association, the Klamath Tribes and BOR and Oregon Water Resource Department officials." He completed "his southern Oregon tour Thursday by meeting with Hoopa and Yurok Tribes at Central Point in the Rogue Valley." Speaking about a potential drought in the Klamath Basin, Mikkelsen said, "The focus of people in the Basin right now is surviving 2018. That's first and foremost on everybody's mind. Long-term solutions are frankly a little bit on the back-burner right now."

### **Reclamation Names New Mid-Pacific Region Deputy Regional Director.**

[Hydroworld](#) (2/8, Poindexter) reports that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Mid-Pacific Region has named Ali Forsythe as their Deputy Regional Director. Regional Director David Murillo said, "Ali is extremely knowledgeable about the issues and water operations in the Mid-Pacific Region. She has excellent relationships with our stakeholders, partners and sister agencies and has extensive facilitation, managerial and leadership skills that she brings to this position. I am confident that her leadership will prove extremely valuable as we continue to work through the many complex and controversial water policy issues we are grappling with today and into the future."

### **Even Cut In Half, Plan For Delta Tunnels Doesn't Win Over Opponents.**

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/8, Kasler) reports that "California officials tried to smooth the way for the Delta tunnels project by slicing it in half," but "instead they're facing more pushback and the possibility of additional delays." On Thursday, "a host of project opponents tried...to halt a state regulatory hearing that's crucial to getting it built." They argued that Gov. Jerry Brown's decision, "after a decade of planning, creates such a monumental change that they need time to analyze the potential impacts on fish, agriculture and the rest of the Delta's troubled ecosystem."

### **Meeting To Provide Information About Pipeline Project.**

The [Farmington \(NM\) Daily Times](#) (2/9, Smith) reports that engineers from the Bureau of Reclamation will give an overview and update about the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project at a meeting on Saturday in Shiprock. Pat Page, deputy construction engineer for the project for the Bureau of Reclamation, "said representatives from the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources will attend as well." He said, "We encourage anybody with questions to come and get

information.”

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Locals Worry Listing Could Impact Water Rights.**

The [Carlsbad \(NM\) Current-Argus](#) (2/8, Hedden) reports that the Texas hornshell mussel has been listed for federal protection under the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “announced the official federal listing of the mussel in a Thursday news release, citing a reduction in water levels and quality as the main threats to the animal’s survival.” Amy Lueders, FWS southwest regional director, said, “The Endangered Species Act is a tool used to help species recover to healthy populations. Going forward, the Service will work with state and local stakeholders to enhance conservation of the hornshell while also respecting local voices.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Courthouse News](#) (2/8, YOUNG-GRINDLE).

### **Conservationists Acquire 477 Acres For Cape May Wildlife Refuge.**

[WHYY-TV](#) Philadelphia (2/8, Holtzman) reports that “the largest privately owned piece of land remaining on the Cape May Peninsula has been added to the Cape May Wildlife Refuge after more than 10 years of negotiations.” The expansion was “pushed through – and partially funded – by a spate of environmental protection groups.” They view “the 477-acre swath as essential for providing habitat to migrating birds and maintaining a healthy ecosystem.”

### **Montana Recommends Against Yellowstone Grizzly Hunt In 2018.**

The [AP](#) (2/8) reports that “Montana wildlife officials are recommending against holding a grizzly bear hunt in 2018 after the animals lost their federal protections across a three-state region around Yellowstone National Park.” Fish, Wildlife and Parks Director Martha Williams “said Thursday the state wants to demonstrate its commitment to the grizzly’s long-term recovery.” State wildlife commissioners will consider the issue Feb. 15.

## **National Park Service**

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### **Congress Scrubs Thomas Jefferson From Gateway To The West.**

The [Washington Times](#) (2/8, Varney) reports that Congress “has scrubbed Thomas Jefferson’s name from a park built to celebrate one of his life’s great achievements and the way it changed America.” The St. Louis arch “anchors what has long been named the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.” In a unanimous voice vote Thursday, “the House sent to President Trump a bill to rename it Gateway Arch National Park. The bill passed the Senate without objection last December.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/8).

### **It’ll Be Lights Out At Statue Of Liberty For Electrical Work.**

The [AP](#) (2/8) reports that the National Park Service says “the lights that illuminate the exterior” of the Statue of Liberty will be turned off Thursday night “to accommodate work on the monument’s electrical system.” However, “the lights on the statue’s torch, crown and pedestal will still be turned on.”

### **Carter G. Woodson’s DC Home Open For Black History Month.**

[WRC-TV](#) Washington (2/8, Cammarata) reports that “for the first time, the Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site is opening its doors to the public for Black History Month, the National Park Service (NPS) says.” The 140-year-old home was “recently reopened after years of renovations, according to the NPS.” According to the article, “during the month of February, visitors can take guided tours of the home, learn how to organize their family histories or take a walking tour through Shaw.”

### **Hawaii Volcanoes Park Gains 222-Acres In Ka’u.**

The [Big Island \(HI\) Video News](#) (2/8) reports that Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park is expanding by 222 acres. A parcel “extending along 1.6 miles of Highway 11 between the towns of Ocean View and Na’alehu in the Ka’u district has been transferred from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to the National Park Service.” Cindy Orlando, Superintendent of Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park,

said, "Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is thrilled to add this priority conservation habitat to our Kahuku Unit. The parcel contains rare dryland forest plants, native birds, and insects, and a lava tube system. This action supports our mission to protect the natural and cultural resources and biodiversity of Hawai'i Island. We are exploring ways to make it accessible for park visitors."

Additional coverage was provided by [Big Island \(HI\) Now](#) (2/8).

### **Faso Secures Funding For Upper Delaware Council.**

The [Narrowsburg \(NY\) River Reporter](#) (2/8) reports that Rep. John Faso on Thursday "announced that the Upper Delaware Council (UDC) has secured critical federal funding from the Department of the Interior in order to continue its important operations." Faso said, "This funding is absolutely critical for UDC and the important work that they do. I am happy that I was able to work with the Department of Interior to help them understand the critical work UDC performs to conserve and manage the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River and ensure that they receive their funding before their March 30th deadline."

### **Yellowstone 'Conservation Fee' Proposed.**

The [Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (2/8, Koshmrl) reports that "Wyoming lawmakers will soon consider whether to start a conversation about having Yellowstone National Park's millions of visitors help pay to conserve the park's transboundary wildlife." A joint House resolution "calls for establishing a 'Yellowstone conservation fee' and sending funds it raises to Wyoming, Montana and Idaho." State Rep. Albert Sommers, "the bill's primary sponsor, said the hope is to generate money for issues like wildlife collisions, large-carnivore conflicts and preserving migration routes."

### **Worries Plague Isle Royale As Wolves Almost Disappear.**

The [Traverse City \(MI\) Record-Eagle](#) (2/8, Laske) reports that Isle Royale National Park "faces an extreme blow to its biodiversity, but new possibilities for help are on the horizon." According to the article, the wolf population faces "extinction on the island while moose face widespread starvation." The article says that "while the current proposal by the National Park Service is to bring wolves from Canada to the island, alternatives are being discussed."

### **Developer, Parks Boss Clash Over Arches Traffic Plan.**

The [Moab \(UT\) Sun News](#) (2/8, Herndon) reports that the National Park Service's Southeast Utah Group superintendent Kate Cannon and Moab developer Michael Liss clashed during a meeting on the Arches National Park's "proposal to adopt a reservation-based entry system during peak visitor periods from March through October." Liss was "there to promote alternatives to the agency's plan, including a proposal to develop a 2,000-car parking area and visitor facilities on an already remediated portion of the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project site." However, "by the time he concluded his remarks, Liss was striking a different tone, saying the two sides are at loggerheads, and warning of the effects that a reservation system could have on Moab's businesses and tourist industry."

### **Zion National Park Initiates Public Scoping For South Entrance Fee Station.**

[KUTV-TV](#) Salt Lake City (2/8, Weaver) reports that public comments are being sought on the National Park Service's proposal to redesign Zion National Park's south entrance fee station. The deadline to submit a comment is March 1, 2018.

### **3 Sites In Arkansas Make National Register, But Johnny Cash's Boyhood Home Falls Short.**

The [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#) (2/8, Bowden) reports that "three more Arkansas properties have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but Johnny Cash's boyhood home in Dyess didn't make the cut - this time." The National Park Service "didn't feel Cash's boyhood home qualified as architecturally significant." Mark Christ, a spokesman for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, "said the state agency will reapply in April." The article notes that "the three properties that did make the list this week included two buildings in Little Rock and the site of a prehistoric village in Mississippi County."

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Mattis Offers Assurances Over Guam's Security.**

[Radio New Zealand](#) (2/7) reports that Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has “offered assurances that Guam’s defenses will continue to be bolstered against North Korean missile threats” during his testimony at a hearing of the House Armed Services Committee on Tuesday. Guam Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo sought an update on protection plans from Mattis at the hearing. Mattis “said beside the defence system on Guam, US navy ships carrying the AEGIS weapons system were on standby in the vicinity.” He said, “We also have several of those ships in Japanese waters right now and they can move back and forth to include coverage of Guam in the mobile way that comes to our navy. But we are looking at all the systems to include Aegis to shore as we look toward the future protection of our Pacific area.”

### **Trump Admin Urged To Restore Medicaid Eligibility For FAS Citizens.**

[Big Island \(HI\) Now](#) (2/7) reports that Sen. Mazie Hirono, during a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing, pressed Insular and International Affairs Assistant Secretary Doug Domenech “for a commitment from the Trump Administration to support the restoration of Medicaid eligibility for citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS) who now reside in the United States.” Hirono told Domenech, “Many of us, particularly from the Hawaii delegation, have been working very hard to restore Medicaid eligibility for FAS citizens. I would appreciate your support in restoring Medicaid eligibility for them because it costs certain places such as Hawai‘i and Guam millions of dollars more than the \$30 million appropriated every year in Compact Impact Funding.”

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Currents: Olivia LeDee, Deputy Director Of The Northeast Climate Science Center.**

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (2/8, Timmons) featured Olivia LeDee, the deputy director of the Northeast Climate Science Center, in a profile. LeDee revealed what she is reading, following, watching and researching. Currently, LeDee is “working with colleagues in Wisconsin and Michigan to review more than 1,300 research articles to identify options to reduce the negative impacts of climate change on wildlife.” She says that their “goal is to put the best science, as a menu of population and habitat management options, in the hands of resource managers.”

### **New Federal Report Looks At Wildlife In A Changing ANWR.**

The [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (2/8, Jenkins) reports that a new federal report could provide “some context for what to expect” on the impact of wildlife when the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge opens up to drilling. Todd Atwood, a polar bear biologist with the United States Geological Survey, I’s going into the field with his team this spring to study denning polar bears and cubs.” He said, “My attitude is science can only help us in understanding what’s likely to happen.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KTOO-FM](#) Juneau, AK (2/8, Jenkins).

### **Additional Reading.**

- *USGS Publicly Turns Spotlight From Climate To Energy.* [Greenwire](#) (2/8, Doyle).
- *USGS Studies Deadly Mudslides To Help With Next Disaster.* [Greenwire](#) (2/8).
- *If The Big One Hits Soon, We Won’t Have Any Warning—Here’s Why.* [Newsweek](#) (2/8, Bartels).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **For 30 Years, California Republicans In D.C. Worked To Protect The Coast. Where Are They Now?**

In an op-ed for the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/8, Panetta), former CIA Director and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta says “Californians know better” in response to a proposal from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke that would open up “nearly the entire outer continental shelf of the United States for oil and gas exploration, including seven potential leases in the Pacific, six of them off California’s coast.” Panetta recalls the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill and says California’s elected representatives should “strongly oppose efforts by the Trump administration to roll back the boundaries or regulations that protect California’s national marine sanctuaries.” Panetta calls on Republican and Democrats in Washington to protect American coasts, saying “[i]t was a bipartisan responsibility in the 1980s, and it remains a bipartisan responsibility today.”

## EDITORIAL: Move The BLM's Headquarters To Nevada.

In an editorial, the [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/8) supports moving the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management to Nevada, which has "the highest percentage of federal land in the nation." The paper says that "tensions between rural Westerners and federal land managers have waxed and waned for decades, with the Cliven Bundy controversy being their latest incarnation." But "bringing more agency officials to the region they manage would go a long way toward fostering a mutual respect and better understanding among ranchers, conservationists and federal land managers alike."

## Don't Move The BLM Headquarters.

In an editorial, the [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (2/8) questions the Interior Department's proposal to move the Bureau of Land Management's headquarters to the West. It notes that "no matter where the agency is headquartered, decision-making for it would remain in Washington, D.C.," since "the BLM's annual budget would be set, not in a home-state west of the Rockies, but in a district west of Chesapeake Bay." According to the editorial, having its headquarters in Washington, D.C. means "members of Congress from Western states have the same access to BLM officials about things other than money, and those officials can answer quickly when questions about the agency and how it runs are raised."

## Additional Reading.

- *Nancy Reagan Is Getting No Love From Congressional Democrats.* [Daily Signal](#) (2/8, Parisi).
- *DRECP Review Threatens To Undo 8 Years Of Negotiation, Compromise.* [Victorville \(CA\) Daily Press](#) (2/8, Simon).
- *A Drilling Reprieve.* [Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette](#) (2/8, Greenberg).
- *GUEST COLUMN: Drilling Moratorium Is A National Security Issue.* [Northwest Florida Daily News](#) (2/8, Gaetz, Ponder).
- *Commentary: Drilling Disaster Looms Off New York State Coast.* [Albany \(NY\) Times Union](#) (2/9, Enck).
- *What Would Teddy Roosevelt Have Done With The Bundys?: Guest Opinion.* [Oregonian](#) (2/8, Stuebner).
- *Thieves Like Bundy Want To Steal Our Legacy.* [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (2/8, Johns).
- *Suit To Block Feral Horse Plan Is Frivolous.* [Mesquite \(NV\) Local News](#) (2/8, Mitchell).
- *Fort Baker Ferry Might Have Benefits.* [Marin \(CA\) Independent Journal](#) (2/8).
- *Don't Get Distracted, Stick With East Windsor Casino Plan.* [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (2/8).
- *Odds Grow Longer For East Windsor Casino.* [Hartford \(CT\) Courant](#) (2/7, Rennie).

## Top National News

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### Senate Sends Spending Measure To House Following Midnight Government Shutdown.

The federal government shut down at midnight due to Sen. Rand Paul's refusal to agree to unanimous consent on a spending measure, forcing the Senate to wait until 1:00 a.m. to hold a vote. At 12:59 a.m., the Senate [voted 73-26](#) to invoke cloture, and at 1:31 a.m. [voted 71-28](#) to restore funding through March 23. The House came into session at 4:00 a.m. and began working through a procedural vote, though the ultimate result there remained uncertain.

The [AP](#) (2/9, Taylor) reports that Senate voted "to reopen the government and pass a \$400 billion budget deal, handing the measure off to the House for a pre-dawn debate where success is not assured." Paul "put the brakes on Senate leaders' plan to drive the agreement quickly through the Senate, repeatedly blocking a Thursday vote and provoking colleagues' frustration." The bill "includes huge spending increases sought by Republicans for the Pentagon along with a big boost demanded by Democrats for domestic agencies." However, in "a bitter defeat for Democrats," it does not address the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

[USA Today](#) (2/9, Shesgreen, Collins) reports that Senate Majority Leader McConnell had "begged his home-state colleague to stop his dilatory tactics and offered to let him make his point" about deficit spending "with a procedural vote. ... Under Senate rules, Paul had to relent at 1 a.m. Friday, when Senate leaders won a motion to take up the bill and then ushered it toward final passage." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/9, Peterson, Andrews) reports that lawmakers of both parties faulted Paul. Senate Majority Whip Cornyn said, "The senator from Kentucky by objecting



to the unanimous consent requests will effectively shut down the federal government, for no real reason.” But Paul said on the Senate floor, “I can’t just look the other way because my party is now complicit in the deficits.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/9, DeBonis, Werner) reports that the “breakdown came amid dispute over the spending deal, which earlier in the week had appeared primed for easy passage” as McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Schumer “unveiled it jointly on the Senate floor with a bipartisan flourish and mutual praise. But it began to run into trouble Thursday, as House conservatives rebelled over excessive deficit spending and House liberals fumed” about the lack of DACA protections.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/9, Mascaro) says the deal “reached this week was intended to draw support from all sides. It boosts both defense and non-defense accounts, and unleashes new funding for the opioid crisis, infrastructure investments in roads, bridges and broadband and multi-year funds for community health centers and the Children’s Health Insurance Program. ... But the accord exposed growing tensions in both parties, pushing forward longstanding disputes over deficit spending and immigration.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/9, Kapur, House) reports that if the House does pass the measure, “funding would be restored before most government workers arrive at their jobs and financial markets open. A failure would trigger the second full government shutdown in three weeks and would be another signal to voters and investors of Congress’s dysfunction.” The [New York Times](#) (2/8, Kaplan) reports that though the House is expected to pass the measure, “the outcome in that chamber was less certain.”

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/8, story 3, 2:10, Muir), the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/8, story 2, 2:05, Glor), and [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/8, story 3, 1:35, Holt) reported on the pre-shutdown negotiations on their evening newscasts, while the [New York Times](#) (2/8, Sanger-Katz, Plumer, Green, Tankersley) looks at some of the provisions in the Senate bill “that help a broad array of industries and sectors, including energy, health care and education, through increased spending and tax credits.”

**CBO Says Budget Deal Will Increase Deficit.** [Bloomberg News](#) (2/8, Dennis) reports that the “bipartisan budget deal...would set the stage for a massive increase in the federal deficit in coming years,” according to the Congressional Budget Office. A CBO report concludes that “an increase in discretionary spending caps would add \$296 billion in spending authority over the next two years – with a follow-up massive spending bill due by March 23 that will allocate which accounts get the extra money.”

Paul Krugman writes in his [New York Times](#) (2/8) column, “How do we know Republicans were never sincere about the deficit? It was obvious, even at the time, to anyone who looked at their fiscal proposals. These proposals always involved giant tax cuts for the wealthy...offset by savage cuts in social benefits.” Krugman writes that during President Obama’s term, “Republicans weren’t just vehemently opposed to fiscal stimulus; they were also vehemently opposed to monetary stimulus. ... Now Obama is gone, and suddenly deficits don’t matter.”

**Budget Deal Includes Relief Funds For Puerto Rico.** The [New York Times](#) (2/8, Mazzei) reports that the Senate budget deal includes disaster relief funds for Puerto Rico, including “\$4.8 billion to replenish dwindling Medicaid funds, \$2 billion to restore the shredded power grid and \$9 billion for housing and urban development projects.” Puerto Rican officials are encouraged by the funds, although the total amount is still well short of the \$94.4 billion that the territory estimated will be required “to rebuild the island after Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and make its infrastructure more resilient to future natural disasters.”

**Trump Budget Proposal To Include \$3 Billion Border Wall “Down Payment.”** [Reuters](#) (2/9, Holland) reports that President Trump’s “budget proposal to be unveiled on Monday will include a request for \$3 billion as a down payment” on building a US-Mexico, “a senior administration official said on Thursday.” The official “said the money would go toward purchasing private land in the Rio Grande Valley in south Texas and advance purchases of steel.”

### **Kelly’s Handling Of Domestic Abuse Allegations Against Porter Under Scrutiny.**

There is heavy and extremely negative coverage of the White House’s handling of domestic abuse allegations against now-departed Staff Secretary Rob Porter, with much of the focus on when Chief of Staff Kelly learned about the charges by Porter’s ex-wives and why action was not taken sooner. Several commentary pieces argue that President Trump’s White House has a history of not taking such allegations seriously.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/8, lead story, 4:55) opened with the story, with David Muir reporting that Porter, “often at the President’s side, was defended by... Kelly as a ‘man of true

integrity and honor.” ABC’s Cecilia Vega: “The West Wing [is] in crisis mode after two of Porter’s ex-wives came forward to publicly accuse him of domestic violence. ... When the story first broke, White House aides praised Porter, one of the President’s top aides, who is also romantically linked to White House Communications Director Hope Hicks.” White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders: “The President and Chief of Staff have had full confidence and trust in his abilities and performance.”

On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/8, story 3, 2:40), Jeff Glor said, “Now the question is, what did others at the White House know about Porter’s capacity when?” CBS’ Major Garrett: “White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah told reporters that Chief of Staff John Kelly only became ‘fully aware’ yesterday” of Porter’s “alleged history of abusing two ex-wives. ... But sources tell CBS News, the FBI informed White House officials in November about the domestic abuse allegations...[that] did not affect Porter’s standing in the White House. In fact, his portfolio expanded. Porter helped draft the President’s State Of The Union address last month, and had recently begun work on trade policy.”

Lester Holt reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/8, story 2, 2:35) about the “questions” about what Kelly “knew and when, and how Porter could have worked so close to the President after the allegations held up his security clearance.” NBC’s Kristen Welker: “The White House [is] calling the allegations of abuse against top aide Rob Porter serious, disturbing, and upsetting, and now the focus here: defending the embattled Chief of Staff John Kelly.” Shah: “The President has confidence in his Chief of Staff. ... I think it’s fair to say that we all could have done better over the last few hours or the last few days.” Welker: “And pressed on why Porter only had an interim security clearance despite the fact that he worked at the President’s side with access to some of the most sensitive materials to cross the President’s desk...” Shah: “The background investigation was not completed. There was no determination made about Rob Porter’s security clearance, there was not a thumbs-up or thumbs-down.”

[USA Today](#) (2/8, Jackson, Korte) reports, “Under fire for allowing Porter to stay in his job months after learning of a security clearance problem, the White House took the relatively unusual step” of discussing the background check process during the news briefing. Shah said that the accusations “‘involve incidents long before he joined the White House’ and that he has repeatedly denied them.” Shah added, “That doesn’t change how serious and disturbing these allegations are. They’re upsetting, and the background check investigates both the allegations and the denials.” [The Hill](#) (2/8, Kamisar) reports that Shah said the President “was ‘saddened’ by the domestic violence allegations” against Porter.

The [New York Times](#) (2/8, Haberman, Rogers, Davis) reports that Porter “abruptly departed the West Wing on Thursday afternoon, one day after” Kelly “and other senior officials had issued statements defending him. He left behind questions about whether Mr. Kelly and other members of Mr. Trump’s inner circle had been willing to ignore serious episodes of domestic violence to protect a trusted aide.” [Politico](#) (2/8, Lima) reports that Kelly “drew rebukes from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle for initially defending Porter, only to express in a statement later on Wednesday that he was ‘shocked’ at the revelations.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/8, Jacobs) reports that “people familiar with the matter” said that Kelly knew that Porter “had issues in his past possibly impeding a permanent security clearance.” Deputy Chief of Staff Joe Hagin was concerned that Porter “hadn’t yet passed a background check more than a year into his tenure” and raised the issue with Kelly, according to the sources. The [Washington Post](#) (2/8, Dawsey, Zapotosky, Barrett) reports that “dozens of White House employees,” including Jared Kushner, “are awaiting permanent security clearances and have been working for months with temporary approvals to handle sensitive information.” [Politico](#) (2/8, Johnson) reports that Kelly “was told several weeks ago that the FBI would deny full security clearances to multiple White House aides who had been working in the West Wing on interim security clearances.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/8, Rucker) writes that Kelly’s credibility has been challenged several times since he left DHS to become chief of staff, when he tried “to contain a political crisis over President Trump’s calls to the families of fallen soldiers,” then “refused to apologize for falsely attacking a Democratic congresswoman,” then “blamed the Civil War on a lack of compromise,” and most recently “said some immigrants known as ‘dreamers’ were ‘too lazy to get off their asses.’” But the “Rob Porter saga” has “left his critics – as well as some West Wing subordinates – questioning how much credibility he has left.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/8, Bierman) says the Porter story “has damaged his reputation as a calming force for an often-chaotic White House.”

[USA Today](#) (2/8) editorializes, “As a retired four-star Marine Corps general, Kelly bore sterling credentials” when he came to the West Wing, and “quickly won rave reviews for bringing

discipline to a disordered White House. But the more we see of the chisel-jawed retired officer and former Homeland Security chief, the less he looks like the turnaround artist the administration needs."

The [New York Times](#) (2/8) says in an editorial that Shah's assertion that the White House takes "violence against women and these types of allegations very seriously" would be more believable if Kelly "hadn't reportedly known about the allegations against Mr. Porter since the fall, and if Mr. Trump's first wife hadn't accused him of rape and if more than a dozen women hadn't said he sexually molested, assaulted and harassed them. That's not to mention his own taped admission of grabbing women by the genitals."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/8) editorializes, "Given this president's history on women's issues – the 'Access Hollywood' tape, accusations from women who say they were manhandled by Mr. Trump, his embrace of an alleged molester of teenage girls for a US Senate seat – it is not particularly surprising that there was not a greater revulsion at the horror of domestic violence. ... Kelly's critics already see an opening to get the knives out. What hopefully will not get lost is the need for women to speak up – and an urgency that, when they do, they will be listened to, as they were not, for too long, in this case."

Michelle Goldberg writes in her [New York Times](#) (2/8) column, "It's hard to see why Kelly, who was supposed to be the disciplined adult in this administration, would cover for Porter. Unless, that is, he genuinely couldn't grasp that domestic violence is a big deal." But "to be fair to Kelly, this administration has made it clear that it's not." Steve Bannon "was charged with misdemeanor domestic violence [and] battery," original labor secretary nominee Andy Puzder was accused of abuse by his ex-wife, and "Trump himself was accused of domestic assault by his first wife, Ivana Trump, in their 1990 divorce deposition."

Philip Rucker of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), "A few questions: -Why didn't [White House Counsel Don] McGahn act upon learning of Porter allegations 13 months ago? -Why didn't Kelly act? -Why didn't they tell Trump until this week? -Why didn't Hicks, who's dating Porter, recuse herself from the crisis comms management?" The Post's Josh Dawsey [tweeted](#), "Don McGahn knew of the ex-wife abuse accusations for a year. He heard at least three times. John Kelly knew for months. FBI findings arrived at White House last summer. Most everyone knew. But Rob Porter stayed and rose."

***House Democrats Address Porter Matter.*** Several House Democrats weighed in on Twitter. Rep. Lacy Clay (D-MO) [tweeted](#), "He couldn't get a security clearance because he is a serial abuser of women, and you let him have daily access to the President and top-secret information." Rep. Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA) [tweeted](#), "The Trump White House is more concerned with protecting a domestic abuser than protecting our country." Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL) [tweeted](#), "Domestic violence is serious. Rob Porter should not have been hired without thorough investigation. Either the White House doesn't get it, or worse, doesn't care." Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) [tweeted](#), "It is reprehensible that the Trump Administration sees fit to protect & promote a staffer that they know has assaulted and abused women. It is abundantly clear where this Administration stands on women's rights." Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) [tweeted](#), "From proposed cuts to Ofc of Violence Against Women to suggestion that Sr. staff like John Kelly potentially knew about domestic violence allegations against Rob Porter & that Porter's clearance was withheld are all part of a culture of misogyny at the #WhiteHouse."

***Ex-Cruz Communications Director: White House "Protected An Abuser."*** Amanda Carpenter, a former communications director for Sen. Ted Cruz, said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/8, 4:12 p.m. ET, Tapper), "The bottom line of this is that they protected an abuser. And guess what is the job qualification to work in the White House? It's to protect someone who talked favorably about sexual assault on the 'Access Hollywood' tapes. ... There's a pattern of behavior. They kept Corey Lewandowski on staff as a campaign manager after he bruised a reporter. ... This is the same president who laughed along with Howard Stern when he says disgusting things about his daughter. ... They protect abusers. There's no way of getting around it, and I guess people will say, 'Well, it doesn't matter. You can still be a good president, you can still do your job.' No. If you are willing to defend someone who hurt somebody in this fashion, you have no boundaries, you have no restraint, you have no respect for the law."

### **White House Stands Firm On March 5 DACA Deadline.**

The White House is sticking to President Trump's March 5 deadline for Congress to take action on the Dreamers, the [Washington Times](#) (2/8, Dinan) reports. While the President has said he reserves the "right" to extend the deadline, "his top lieutenants, including his chief of staff, Justice Department and Homeland Security secretary all said he doesn't have that power." White



House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah said, "March 5 is the deadline."

### **Dow Loses More Than 1,000 Points For Second Time This Week.**

Stocks posted steep declines again Thursday. For the second time this week, the Dow lost more than 1,000 points, putting it 10% below its record high in January, which the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/8, Puzzanghera) reports is "the level considered a market correction." The S&P 500 and the Nasdaq also finished "near correction levels" on Thursday.

[Reuters](#) (2/8, Krauskopf) reports that the Dow lost 1,032.89 points to close at 23,860.46, while the S&P 500 fell 100.66 points to 2,581, and the Nasdaq ended the day 274.83 points lower at 6,777.16. The [AP](#) (2/8, Jay) says Thursday's "The losses were broad. Four stocks fell for every one that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, and 10 out of the 11 industry sectors in the S&P 500 index were down." In the lead story for [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/8, lead story, 1:40), Lester Holt described "another massive meltdown in the stock markets," and added that analysts are "saying we may, in fact, be witnessing a long expected market correction."

Linzie Janis said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/8, story 2, 2:05, Muir) that "investors tell ABC News the fast and furious selloff is actually about anxiety the economy is doing too well too quickly and fears the Federal Reserve may have to hike rates more aggressively this year in order to keep inflation under control."

The [New York Times](#) (2/8, Hsu) cites the Bank of England's comments that "it might raise interest rates sooner and higher than expected as it looks to fend off possible inflation" as a "likely catalyst for Thursday's fall," saying the comments were "the latest signal that an epic run of easy money, which buoyed markets worldwide, is coming to an end." [Bloomberg News](#) (2/8, Ponczek, Herron) points to "pressure" from "the Treasury market, where another weak auction put gave bond bears ammunition, sending the 10-year yield to the highest in four years," which equity investors took "to mean interest rates will push higher, denting earnings and consumer-spending power."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/8, Heath) reports that market watchers see the decline as "healthy." Greg McBride, chief financial analyst at Bankrate.com, said, "When the market declines sharply, everyone naturally wonders 'What's wrong?' ... Nothing is wrong economically. The economy is doing better now than it has any time in the past decade. This is just some healthy, and overdue, volatility to wring out any excess." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/8, Otani, Sindreu) reports that analysts anticipate that corporate earnings will continue to grow and worldwide economic growth to increase, which will foster long-term growth in the stock market.

Business analyst Jill Schlesinger said in the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/8, lead story, 2:20, Glor) that "if the selling continues, if not just a correction, we get to a bear market, that could erode confidence, both on the consumer level, perhaps, more importantly, with companies. It's very important that we see companies kind of stand up to this. If they do, we'll be okay. But the reality is, without that confidence, they won't hire, they won't spend money, and we need them to do that. We need consumers to do that as well."

A [New York Times](#) (2/8, Cohen) analysis says the recent "riotous market swings" have "virtually no impact on the income or wealth of most families" because they "own little or no stock." While "Republicans and Democrats have promoted the idea that a rising stock market broadly lifts Americans' fortunes," the "day-to-day impact on most people's overall wealth is minimal."

### **White House Says Energy Infrastructure Permitting Reform Will Be Part Of Infrastructure Plan.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/8, Siegel) reports that the Trump administration is expected to make energy infrastructure permitting reform one of the "three principles" of a soon to be announced infrastructure investment plan. According a White House official, the proposal will aim to reduce the "burdensome permitting process from an average of 10 years to two," an initiative that would please the energy industry. American Petroleum Institute president and CEO Jack Gerard "has called for Congress and the administration to improve predictability in permitting, which he said would encourage private investment in energy infrastructure."

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

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### **New York Times.**

*"What If Donald Trump Really Cared About Women's Safety?"* The [New York Times](#) (2/8)

says in an editorial that White House principal deputy press secretary Raj Shah's assertion that the White House takes "violence against women and these types of allegations very seriously" would be more believable if White House Chief of Staff Kelly "hadn't reportedly known about the allegations against [staff secretary Rob] Porter since the fall, and if Mr. Trump's first wife hadn't accused him of rape and if more than a dozen women hadn't said he sexually molested, assaulted and harassed them. That's not to mention his own taped admission of grabbing women by the genitals."

***"Here's Hoping The Winter Games Lead To A Thaw In Korea."*** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/8) welcomes "a moment of sanity in what has been a problem hurtling toward a military confrontation" as South Korea seeks to use the Olympics to reach out to the North. While top Trump Administration officials and many experts "doubt that anything serious will come of the South Korean initiative," The Times argues such "outreach is necessary and courageous." The Times concludes, "No matter how difficult it will be to peacefully resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis, the United States and its allies need to exhaust all diplomatic options," warning that the alternative is "another escalatory spiral" and "nothing good can come of that."

***"The Great Republican Power Grab."*** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/8) says that the Supreme Court in the near future "is expected to rule...on one of the most corrosive practices in modern American democracy – the drawing of legislative district maps to entrench the party in power" – otherwise "known as partisan gerrymandering." To date, "the court has refused to rein it in because, the claim goes, any possible fix lies with the political branches and not the courts. That's bunk." The Times urges SCOTUS to rein in gerrymandering.

### **Washington Post.**

***"The White House Shrugged Off Domestic Violence. It's Not Alone."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/8) editorializes, "Given this president's history on women's issues – the 'Access Hollywood' tape, accusations from women who say they were manhandled by Mr. Trump, his embrace of an alleged molester of teenage girls for a US Senate seat – it is not particularly surprising that there was not a greater revulsion at the horror of domestic violence" following allegations involving staff secretary Rob Porter. White House Chief of Staff Kelly's "critics already see an opening to get the knives out. What hopefully will not get lost is the need for women to speak up – and an urgency that, when they do, they will be listened to, as they were not, for too long, in this case."

***"Graduation Scandals In DC And Prince George's Aren't An Excuse To Go Backwards."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/8), in an editorial, notes that "the District and Prince George's County have been roiled by revelations that public high schools allowed hundreds of ineligible students to graduate, including many who missed most of their senior years." According to the Post, "it is clear the troubles extended beyond individuals to systemic breakdowns and cultures that seemingly encouraged cutting corners to boost graduation rates. A federal probe is underway in the District, and additional problems may be revealed."

***"An Arms Embargo Against South Sudan Comes Better Late Than Never."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/8) editorializes that the United States must continue to support efforts for stabilization in South Sudan. The editors write that "no matter how frustrated with the continuing violence and lack of leadership, the United States cannot abandon the victims of war and famine," given its role in helping to create the country and then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's promise at the time of South Sudan's independence that the United States would be "a steadfast partner" to the new country. The "disastrous rule" of President Salva Kiir "means the United States must continue to search for other interlocutors in South Sudan," and the US should try again to impose an arms embargo through the United Nations Security Council.

### **Wall Street Journal.**

***"Distorted Campus Assault Math."*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/8) editorializes that the House of Representatives will soon consider legislation to reauthorize the Higher Education Act that will likely include guidance on how universities should respond to sexual assault. A version of the bill approved by the House Education and Workforce Committee in December would require college administrators to conduct campus-climate surveys on sexual assault every three years, and the Journal warns that failure to require rigorous standards on such surveys could create policies based on false assumptions and faulty data.

***"Scott Walker's Subsidy Blowback."*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/8) criticizes Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's efforts to show that he is helping employees of Kimberly-Clark and FoxConn, saying his promises are raising costs to taxpayers and bidding up corporate subsidies. Walker's promise last year to FoxConn of state aid to build a plant in Racine has put him under pressure to

offer similar support to Kimberly-Clark, and has high projected costs which will not be recouped until at least 2043. The Journal says that instead of offering such deals to large employers, Walker should lower the state's income and business taxes, which would benefit all workers.

*"Testing Trump's Chemical Red Line."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/8) editorializes that unless the Trump Administration bombs strategic bases in Syria as he did last year in response to the government's use of chemical weapons, the Assad regime will continue to launch such attacks. The Journal criticizes the Administration for its weak rhetoric without action toward Syria, likening it to the Obama Administration's approach. The Journal also cites Russia's backing of Assad as thwarting UN-led efforts to investigate and end such attacks and blocking US goals in the Middle East.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Congress Goes To The Wire On Budget Deal Ahead Of Shutdown Deadline](#)

[Dow Industrials Plunge Into Correction](#)

[The Corporate Giant Lurking Behind The Winter Olympics](#)

[US Secretly Offered Iran A Channel For Talks On Prisoners](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[Senate Passes Budget Bill To Raise Spending And Reopen Government](#)

[Far From Winding Down, Syria's War Escalates On Multiple Fronts](#)

[Stocks Plunge As Market Enters 'Correction' Territory](#)

[Republicans Learn To Love Deficit Spending They Once Loathed](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[Shutdown Looms As Budget Deal Hits Obstacles On Hill](#)

[Top Trump Aides Knew Of Abuse Allegations](#)

[Dow Falls 1,000 As Investors' Fears Rise](#)

[Putting Words Into Action](#)

[Chief Of Staff Again Finds Himself In The Spotlight](#)

#### **Financial Times:**

[US-Led Coalition Kills Dozens Of Pro-Assad Troops](#)

[Twitter's First Profit Sends Shares Soaring](#)

[Netanyahu Attacks Police Chief In Bribery Inquiries](#)

[Bank Of England Looks At Earlier And Faster Rate Rises](#)

#### **Washington Times:**

[Budget Deal Shows High Cost Of Bipartisanship](#)

[Congressional Leaders Battle Clock, Rand Paul In Bid To Stop Shutdown](#)

[Winding Path To Olympics – NHL's Decision Gives Virginia Hockey Player The Chance Of A Lifetime](#)

['Mission Creep' Fears Rise After U.S. Airstrike In Syria](#)

[Congress Scrubs Thomas Jefferson From Gateway To The West](#)

[Students, Faculty Pose Biggest Threat To Academic Freedom, Report Finds](#)

#### **Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** White House Top Aide Resignation; Stock Market Crash; Budget Deal; Severe Weather; Winter Olympics; White House-Omarosa; Brazil-American Child Abduction; Serial Killer; NFL News; Super Bowl Victory Parade; Children's Toy.

**CBS:** Stock Market Crash; Budget Deal; White House Top Aide Resignation; Flu Epidemic; Puerto Rico Restoration Controversy; Severe Weather; Border Patrol Death Investigation; Drowsy Driving; Super Bowl Victory Parade; Elderly Runner.

**NBC:** Stock Market Crash; White House Top Aide Resignation; Budget Deal; Winter Olympics-North Korea; Winter Olympics-Team USA; Winter Olympics-South Korea History; Amazon-Review Scam; Severe Weather; Super Bowl Victory Parade; Chicago-Twins; Figure Skating Pair.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

White House Top Aide Resignation – 10 minutes, 10 seconds

Stock Market Crash – 6 minutes, 5 seconds

Budget Deal – 5 minutes, 50 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Budget Deal; Winter Olympics-VP Pence; Stock Market Crash.

**CBS:** Budget Deal; Stock Market Crash; Winter Olympics; White House Top Aide Resignation.

**FOX:** Budget Deal; White House Top Aide Resignation; Stock Market Crash.

**NPR:** Budget Deal; WH-Immigration Policy; White House Top Aide Resignation; Stock Market Crash.

## Washington Schedule

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**Today's Events In Washington.****White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with the Secretary of State Rex Tillerson; meets with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Tours the West Sea Protection Hall, meet with North Korean defectors and tour the Republic of Korea's Cheonan memorial; attends the 2018 Olympic Winter Games Opening Ceremony.

**US Senate:** No public schedule announced.

**US House:** House Democratic Caucus Issues Conference concludes – 2018 House Democratic Caucus Issues Conference, final day. This year's theme is 'United For A Better Tomorrow', with discussion on the economy, education, healthcare, immigration, and economic challenges faced by women and working families. Speakers throughout the Conference include former U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Preet Bharara, former Attorney General Eric Holder, former Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe, actor Aasif Mandvi, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, House Democratic Chairman Joe Crowley, Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez, Hoboken, NJ Mayor Ravi Bhalla, Topeka, KS Mayor Michelle De La Isla, and authors Joan Williams and David Daley. Former Vice President Joe Biden delivered opening day keynote \* Relocated from Cambridge, MD, to the U.S. Capitol at the last minute due to legislative business Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC Cambridge <http://www.dems.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseDemocrats>

No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives – No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives, coinciding with the ongoing Democratic retreat, although plans may change.

**Other:** No relevant event scheduled.

## Last Laughs

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**Late Night Political Humor.**

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "North Korea is sending a delegation to Pyeongchang led by Kim Jong-Un's younger sister, who is scheduled to have a lunch on Saturday with the South Korean president, which is a big deal diplomatically. Also, it's going to be a big deal for whoever is going to have to explain what lunch is to North Koreans."

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Yesterday, senators agreed to a plan to fund the government to keep it open two years, but today, Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky decided to block the vote. So this bill, if passed, will fund the government for two years. Cellphone contracts go for two years – why is the government making shorter commitments than Verizon?"

**Stephen Colbert:** "[White House Staffer] Rob Porter resigned yesterday after evidence surfaced that he physically abused his two ex-wives. These are horrible, sickening revelations, so the White House had no choice but to defend him."

**James Corden:** "It was a historic day in Washington because House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi made a speech in support of undocumented immigrants, and the speech was a record-breaking eight hours long. Don't worry if you missed it – she is going to release it as five separate Netflix

specials."

**James Corden:** "Tensions between Republicans and Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee have become so strained. And this is true, they are building a literal wall down the middle of their office to separate the two sides. If you are wondering, no, Mexico won't be paying for this one either."

**Trevor Noah:** [Referring to the budget deal in Congress] "The way Mitch McConnell giggled made it sound like something romantic happened. 'We've had extensive negotiations. It was very push and pull,' get it?"

**Trevor Noah:** [Referring to the firing of White House Staffer Rob Porter] "I missed the days when White House staffers got fired for fun stuff: Spicey couldn't talk, the Mooch couldn't shut up, Steve Bannon couldn't shower. But I'm sorry, this story hit me hard because not only did the White House have a domestic abuser in its midst, a lot of the people there – especially the Chief of Staff, an alleged adult in the room – John Kelly just ignored it for months."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "Vice President Mike Pence will lead the US delegation in Pyeongchang, while Trump will lead a delegation at PF Chang's."

**Seth Meyers:** "President Trump today met with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who is 94 years old. When Trump asked him what his secret was, Kissinger said, 'Committed war crimes during Vietnam.'"

**Seth Meyers:** "President Trump today met with the President of Guatemala. Said Trump, 'I love Guatemala, especially with chips and salsa.'"

**Seth Meyers:** "Experts are warning that smart TVs could be extremely susceptible to hacking, which explains why the President only watches dumb TV."

**Conan O'Brien:** "An appeals court has ruled that President Trump has to pay \$25 million to Trump University students. So if you think about it, Trump is not lying when he says graduates of Trump University make a lot of money."

**Jordan Klepper:** [Referring to the firing of White House Staffer Rob Porter] "Some might find it odd that [Chief of Staff John] Kelly is shocked over something he already knew about, but there's one simple explanation: The deep state infiltrated John Kelly's mind and erased his memory using microscopic serum injections blow-darted into his skull by the Obamas' dog, Bo, who's been camped out in the White House as a covert canine-agent, causing Kelly to wake up every morning and re-forget the fact that he works closely with Rob Porter, the alleged spouse abuser, and not the Rob Porter who Kelly describes as a 'man of true integrity and honor,' until yesterday, when his memories were triggered and then reactivated, causing him to describe himself as 'shocked.'"

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**Subject:** Introduction  
**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 7:24:33 AM

---

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Thanks so much.

Susan

--

Susan Combs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1-202-208-4482

**From:** Sylvia Burns  
**To:** [Combs, Susan](#)  
**Cc:** [sbarber@identity.utexas.edu](mailto:sbarber@identity.utexas.edu); Joy Nicholopoulos  
**Subject:** Re: Introduction  
**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 7:29:25 AM

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Sylvia

**Sylvia Burns, CIO**

Office of the Chief Information Officer

US Department of the Interior

[sylvia\\_burns@ios.doi.gov](mailto:sylvia_burns@ios.doi.gov)

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Fax: 202-501-2360

[www.doi.gov/ocio](http://www.doi.gov/ocio)

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**To:** [Sylvia Burns](#); [Combs, Susan](#)  
**Cc:** [Joy Nicholopoulos](#); [Stephanie Michelle](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Introduction  
**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 2:52:39 PM

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**Subject:** Re: Introduction  
**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 2:56:04 PM

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***Our mission is your mission***

**From:** Burns, Sylvia  
**To:** [Suzanne Barber](#)  
**Cc:** [Combs, Susan](#); [Joy Nicholopoulos](#); [Stephanie Michelle](#); [Rotimi Abimbola](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Introduction  
**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 2:57:14 PM

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**To:** [Burns, Sylvia](#)  
**Cc:** [Combs, Susan](#); [Joy Nicholopoulos](#); [Stephanie Michelle](#); [Rotimi Abimbola](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Introduction  
**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 3:26:02 PM

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Perfect. I look forward to our call.

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**From:** "Burns, Sylvia" <[sylvia\\_burns@ios.doi.gov](mailto:sylvia_burns@ios.doi.gov)>  
**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 at 1:56 PM  
**To:** Suzanne Barber <[sbarber@identity.utexas.edu](mailto:sbarber@identity.utexas.edu)>  
**Cc:** "Combs, Susan" <[susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov)>, Joy Nicholopoulos <[joy\\_nicholopoulos@fws.gov](mailto:joy_nicholopoulos@fws.gov)>, Stephanie Michelle <[stephanie@identity.utexas.edu](mailto:stephanie@identity.utexas.edu)>, Rotimi Abimbola <[rotimi\\_abimbola@ios.doi.gov](mailto:rotimi_abimbola@ios.doi.gov)>  
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**From:** Bulletin Intelligence  
**To:** [Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com](mailto:Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com)  
**Subject:** U S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, February 13, 2018  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 13, 2018 6:00:04 AM

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Mobile version and searchable archives available [here](#). Please [click here](#) to subscribe.

[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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## DOI In The News

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### **President's \$11.7 Billion Proposed FY 2019 Budget For Interior Includes Legislation To Strengthen Infrastructure And Address Deferred Maintenance.**

The [Sierra \(CA\) Sun Times](#) (2/12) reports that President Trump on Monday proposed an \$11.7 billion budget for fiscal year 2019 for the Interior Department "that includes a legislative proposal to establish the Public Lands Infrastructure Fund." The fund will "provide up to \$18 billion to address Interior's deferred maintenance backlog in national parks, national wildlife refuges and Bureau of Indian Education schools through funding from energy leasing revenues." In addition, to "strengthening the nation's infrastructure, the proposed budget prioritizes economic growth and expanded public access for outdoor recreation." Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, "President Trump is absolutely right to call for a robust infrastructure plan that rebuilds our national parks, refuges, and Indian schools, and I look forward to helping him deliver on that historic mission. Our parks and refuges are being loved to death, but the real heart break is the condition of the schools in Indian Country. We can and must do better for these young scholars. This is not a Republican or Democrat issue, this is an American issue, and the President and I are ready to work with absolutely anyone in Congress who is willing to get the work done."

The [AP](#) (2/12) reports that "the budget also includes \$17.5 million to begin to implement Zinke's plan to reorganize the department and shift some agency headquarters, including the Bureaus of Land Management and Reclamation, and the Fish and Wildlife Service, to the West."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/13, Coleman) and the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/13, Harmon).

***Interior Budget Seeks To Repair National Parks Using Energy Leasing Revenue.*** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/12, Siegel) reports that the Public Lands Infrastructure Fund "would be paid for by new leases for energy development on onshore and offshore federal lands." The Coalition to Protect National Parks "criticized Zinke's new plan to use money raised from energy leasing to pay for park fixes, saying that it shows his preference for fossil fuel drilling on federal land and waters." But "Zinke told reporters it's not a 'conflict of interest' to fund the park repairs with energy development lease sales, arguing he doesn't favor one energy source over any other."

***Trump's \$1.5T Infrastructure Plan Would Give Interior Input On NatGas Pipelines.*** [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (2/12, Passut) reports that the plan proposes giving the Interior Department secretary "the authority to review and approve rights-of-way for oil and gas pipelines across lands administered by its National Park Service (NPS)." According to the article, "representatives for the energy industry reacted positively to Trump's plan."

Also reporting are the [Huffington Post](#) (2/12, D'Angelo) and [Mashable](#) (2/12, Freedman).

***Spirits Of '76? U.S. Interior Chief Proposes Holograms To Invigorate Independence Hall.*** [WHYY-TV Philadelphia](#) (2/12, Crimmins) reports that during a budget conference call Monday, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said that holograms could be used to "enliven" Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Zinke said, "We're looking at innovative ideas to bring that building alive a little more, with perhaps holograms." In an email, Gina Gilliam, a spokeswoman for Independence National Historic Park, "said the park is looking at many ways to use technology to enhance visitor experience, but had no definite plans yet."

***Secretary Of Interior Orders More Aggressive Fuel Management.*** [Wildfire Today](#) (2/12, Gabbert) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke in a February 12 press release about the White House's proposed budget referred to a September 12, 2017 directive that ordered "more aggressive practices" to "prevent and combat the spread of catastrophic wildfires through robust fuels reduction and pre-suppression techniques". Zinke said, "In September, I directed all land managers to adopt aggressive practices to prevent the spread of catastrophic wildfires. The President's budget request for the Wildland Fire Management program provides the resources needed for fuels management and efforts that will help protect firefighters, the public and local communities."

**Sen. Alexander: Congress Will Propose Law To Address National Parks Maintenance Backlog.** [WBIR-TV](#) Knoxville, TN (2/12, Erickson) reports that Sen. Lamar Alexander “announced Monday he will partner with other members of Congress to introduce legislation addressing the growing maintenance backlog in the country’s national parks.” In a statement, Alexander said lawmakers will introduce legislation “in the coming weeks” to “help restore and rebuild national parks” after President Trump “included a proposal to address the National Park Service maintenance backlog in his infrastructure plan.” Alexander said, “We agree that we have a responsibility to address the growing maintenance backlog in our national parks – which includes roads, buildings, campgrounds, trails, water systems and more. This is an issue Congress has been focused on for many years, and working with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, we will introduce bipartisan legislation in the House of Representatives and the Senate in the coming weeks to help restore and rebuild our national parks for the next generation of visitors.”

**Bishop Praises Plans To Speed Permits, Move US Land Managers.** The [AP](#) (2/12) reports that Rep. Rob Bishop is praising the Trump Administration’s plans to “streamline environmental reviews to speed up permits for infrastructure projects.” Addressing lawmakers in Utah’s Senate in Salt Lake City on Monday, Bishop said “that Trump’s plan to shorten the environmental review process as part of the president’s \$1.5 trillion infrastructure plan will make it so ‘you can build things in a reasonable amount of time.’” Bishop “also praised a proposal from U.S. interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to move the headquarters of the U.S. Bureau of Land management to a western state.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/12, Roche).

### **Trump Admin Proposes Repealing Most Of Obama Methane Leak Rule.**

[The Hill](#) (2/12, Cama) reports that the Trump Administration is proposing to repeal most of the requirements of the a Obama-era rule aimed at regulating methane emissions from oil and natural gas drilling on federal land. The Bureau of Land Management said requirements for drillers to “write leak-minimization plans, update equipment and detect leaks, among other actions” were “overly burdensome.” The revised rule would maintain some requirements, “like measuring the gas released by drillers and charging drillers for some gas released.” Joe Balash, Interior’s assistant secretary for land and minerals management, said that “in order to achieve energy dominance through responsible energy production, we need smart regulations, not punitive regulations.” Similarly, American Petroleum Institute upstream director Erik Milito said, “We are supportive of smart regulation that is effectively tailored to BLM’s authority to prevent waste and conserve resources, an objective that our industry shares.” Trump Administration Plans To Undo Methane-Emission Rule.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/12, Puko) reports that proposal would virtually eliminate the rule. The [AP](#) (2/12, Daly) reports that Fred Krupp, president of the Environmental Defense Fund, said the new proposal “would only serve to reward the least responsible actors in industry at a time when other companies are moving forward to tackle methane waste,” citing a voluntary industry program to reduce methane emissions in their operations. The American Petroleum Institute-led program “is intended to encourage drillers to find and fix leaks and take other steps to reduce the escape of natural gas into the atmosphere during drilling operations.”

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/12, Siciliano) reports that the BLM wrote, “This proposal would align the regulations with administration priorities on energy development, job creation and reduced compliance costs while also working more closely with existing state regulatory efforts.” Meanwhile, some environmental groups called the proposal “unconscionable.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [New York Times](#) (2/12, Friedman) and [KTVQ-TV](#) Billings, MT (2/12).

**Methane Gets A Fresh Look As Trump Scraps Rules.** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/12, Siciliano) reports a new study in the journal Climate Policy found that “atmospheric methane emission levels ‘continue to increase globally,’ despite” emissions restrictions on drillers. The study concludes that despite the continued rise, the US can still cut methane emissions but only “if the federal government is consistent in its emissions counting, while seeking science-based ways to control methane leaks from oil and natural gas wells,” the article says.

### **Trump Officials Under Fire For Tapping “Temps” To Head Key Interior Agencies.**

[McClatchy](#) (2/12, Leavenworth) reports that the Trump Administration is “violating federal law and circumventing the advice-and-consent role of the Senate by relying on temporary directors to head agencies such as the National Park Service, an environmental group alleged Monday.” In a complaint filed with the Interior Department’s Office of Inspector General, the watchdog group

Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility contended "that Interior was 'completely bypassing Senate confirmation' with its appointments of acting directors to lead the Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management." Jeff Ruch, director of PEER, said, "Federal agencies are not supposed to be run like a temp service."

[Splinter News](#) (2/12, Baskin) reports that PEER also "points out that all three acting directors – Dan Smith of the NPS, Brian Steed of the BLM, and Greg Sheehan of the FWS – seem to be ineligible for their jobs." The Federal Vacancies Reform Act "requires acting directors to have served in their respective agencies for at least 90 days in the year before the vacancy occurred, which the three men apparently did not." Moreover, "it's also not within" Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "purview to appoint acting directors – that's the president's job – but that didn't stop him from announcing that he appointed Smith, Steed, and Sheehan."

Additional coverage was provided by [Law360](#) (2/12, Goldberg).

### **Group: Wyoming Sage Grouse Farm Received Special Treatment.**

The [AP](#) (2/12) reports that "an environmental group contends an oilman's desire to breed sage grouse at his northern Wyoming bird farm found preferential treatment with the U.S. Interior Department." However, "oilman Diemer True counters that there was nothing inappropriate about his request for support from the Interior Department for his captive breeding experiment." Western Values Project "obtained a series of emails between federal officials and True regarding his proposal." The article notes that "True's correspondence with the Interior in July coincided with a review of the federal sage grouse management program," and "the following month, the Interior Department published a report mentioning support for captive breeding."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Connecticut Officials Call For Probe Of Interior Department.**

The [AP](#) (2/12) reports from Hartford, CT that "Connecticut officials on Monday called for an investigation of the U.S. Department of the Interior's failure to act on revenue sharing agreements between the state and two Native American tribes that are needed for the tribes to build and operate a new casino." Sens. Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy and Reps. John Larson and Joe Courtney "made the request in a letter to the Interior Department's Office of Inspector General." The AP adds that "the two federally recognized tribes, the Mohegans and Mashantucket Pequots, separately operate two of the largest casinos in the world in southeastern Connecticut – Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods Resort Casino." According to the AP, the tribes "are planning a jointly-run casino in East Windsor in northern Connecticut to compete with a new casino being built by MGM Resorts that is scheduled to open in Springfield, Massachusetts, in September."

Also reporting are [Politico](#) (2/12, Juliano), the [Hartford \(CT\) Courant](#) (2/12, Gosselin), the [Connecticut Mirror](#) (2/12, Pazniokas), and [Law360](#) (2/12, Phillis).

### **9th Circ. Judge: Tribe 'Did Nothing' To Stop Rival Casino.**

[Law360](#) (2/12, Bayles) reports that "during a hearing Monday, a Ninth Circuit judge asked whether the Cachil DeHe Band of Wintun Indians of the Colusa Indian Community waived its right to challenge another tribe's proposed casino hotel when it 'did nothing' to notify the U.S. Department of the Interior about the project's effect on its own casinos."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Move BLM To Grand Junction, County Urges.**

The [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/13, Harmon) reports that the Mesa County Commission on Monday "unanimously approved a resolution urging the Interior Department to move the BLM headquarters to Grand Junction." The resolution cites Grand Junction's "supportive business climate and proximity to lands administered by the bureau, both in Colorado and in neighboring states." It also notes that the county's economic vitality "is dependent on BLM managing our federal lands for multiple use."

### **Land Managers Present Plan To Install Fire Breaks In Nevada.**

The [AP](#) (2/13) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has "presented plans in northeast



Nevada for a 10-year program that would install fire breaks and restore rangeland in the Great Basin." The environmental impact process is "expected to lead to on-the-ground projects that will be site-specific but not require individual assessments prior to action."

### **BLM Pays Reward In Black Cliffs Graffiti Case.**

[East Idaho News](#) (2/12) reports that the Bureau of Land Management "recently paid out a reward to a citizen whose tip helped identify the person responsible for the March 2017 graffiti in the Black Cliffs area, a popular climbing spot located on BLM-managed public lands along Highway 21 near Warm Springs Avenue in Boise." Boise District Supervisory Law Enforcement Officer Stan Buchanan said, "We are grateful for the help of concerned citizens who share our goal of good stewardship on public lands. We also want to thank the Ada County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and Boise Police Department for their support and hard work on the case."

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Lawmakers Seek Firmer Stance Against Drilling Off Georgia.**

The [AP](#) (2/11, Bynum, Rico) reports a bipartisan group of Georgian lawmakers are seeking "to fill the political vacuum" created by the inaction of Gov. Nathan Deal on the possible expansion of offshore drilling to Georgia's coasts and "are pushing resolutions in the state House and Senate that would flat out declare opposition to drilling." Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal has opted to stick to "cautious, measured responses to President Donald Trump's proposal to expand oil drilling into waters off Georgia and its coastal neighbors." The bipartisan group believes the expansion of offshore drilling to the state's coastline "would risk fouling Georgia's pristine salt marshes, threaten endangered right whales that give birth off Georgia and potentially devastate local economies." The [Savannah \(GA\) Morning News](#) (2/9, Landers) reports identical versions of legislature seeking to prevent "offshore drilling and seismic testing on the Georgia coast are making their way through both chambers of the state legislature." The bills were sponsored by "[b]ipartisan coastal lawmakers, along with some inland colleagues," who framed the resolutions "in terms of supporting Georgia's coastal tourism and fisheries."

*Is Florida In Or Out Of Offshore Drilling Plan? Feds Could Decide Later This Year.* [WFSU-FM](#) Tallahassee, FL (2/9, Hatter) reports the BOEM hosted a public hearing in Tallahassee, Florida on the proposed federal offshore drilling plan. During the meeting, the BOEM opted to only take "written comments but not oral ones, which led environmentalists to hold their own hearing next door." During the meeting, "[a]bout three dozen people representing various organizations...excoriated a proposed five-year plan for offshore drilling."

*Rep. Harris: Doesn't Support Offshore Drilling Off Maryland.* The [AP](#) (2/10) reported Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD), the sole Republican in Maryland's congressional delegation, clarified his position on offshore drilling during a recent town hall. Harris maintained that he supported offshore drilling, but would oppose it in jurisdictions – like Maryland – that did not want it. Harris said, "[S]ince Ocean City and the local jurisdictions do oppose it in Maryland, I oppose it off the coast of Maryland." The [Baltimore Sun](#) (2/9, Dance) reports Harris is the latest in "a growing number of Republicans who have opposed the Trump administration on offshore drilling."

*Calif. Officials Push New 'Wall Of Resistance' To Drilling.* [E&E Publishing](#) (2/9) reports officials in California's state government "are resurrecting an old strategy once used by coastal municipalities to block offshore drilling." During the Reagan administration, several California cities passed measures that required new oil infrastructure on municipal land to be approved by a public vote. Now, California's State Lands Commission has said it will "reject permits for offshore pipelines," and state lawmakers "are contemplating a ban on new oil piers and pipelines in state waters." IHS Markit analyst Bob Fryklund believes the measures could "dampen industry interest in drilling off California's coast," but at the same time, "some companies could get oil to market via floating oil rigs, without the need to build infrastructure on land." The [Huffington Post](#) (2/9, Papenfuss) reports the California State Lands Commission issued a warning to the Trump administration on Wednesday that the commission would "not issue the pipeline permits drillers would need." The [Lake County \(CA\) News](#) (2/11) reports California Secretary for Natural Resources John Laird, in a letter to the BOEM, issued formal comments opposing the federal offshore drilling proposal.

### **SMAST Meeting Brings Fishing, Offshore Wind In Same Room.**

The [New Bedford \(MA\) Standard-Times](#) (2/12, Bonner) reports that twenty members of the

Fisheries Working Group on Offshore Wind Energy on Monday “sat around a table at SMAST East hoping to solve various issues between the two ocean-based industries.” According to the article, “offshore wind developers spent the majority of a 3-hour meeting Monday attempting to win over the local commercial fishing industry.” However, “for much of the meeting, the fishermen in attendance rolled their eyes, scoffed at various PowerPoint slides and even went as far as to say offshore wind is unwanted.”

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Klamath Basin Irrigators, Fish Face Dry Year, Officials Say.**

The [Eureka \(CA\) Times Standard](#) (2/12, Houston) reports that “anticipating a poor water year in California’s and Oregon’s Klamath River Basin, the federal government is seeking to find a way to balance its obligations to protect fish species while also ensuring Klamath Basin irrigators and water districts have access to water.” The Bureau of Reclamation is now taking public input on “a proposal that would allow irrigators and water districts in the basin to use its Klamath Basin Project infrastructure, such as canals, to transport their private water should the project’s water supplies be constrained.”

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Texas Hornshell Mussel Placed On The Endangered Species List.**

The [AP](#) (2/12, Contreras) reports that “a freshwater mussel species once found throughout the Rio Grande drainage has been placed on the U.S. endangered species list.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “issued the listing last week for the Texas hornshell, drawing praise from environmentalists and criticism from a Republican congressman.” Michael Robinson at the Center for Biological Diversity “said the listing gives the unique mussel an excellent chance of survival ‘in the face of would-be dam-builders and polluters’ in the mussel’s habitat.” However, Rep. Steve Pearce “said the listing could harm local communities, businesses, jobs, and may reduce New Mexico’s revenues from local energy production.”

### **Refuge Reopens After Swine Eradication Efforts.**

The [Mohave Valley \(AZ\) Daily News](#) (2/12) reports that “a temporary closure on Havasu National Wildlife Refuge has been lifted, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, after an operation illustrating cooperation between federal government agencies.” Feral swine eradication efforts closed most of the refuge last week. The USDA “eliminated 67 invasive feral swine on the refuge in just 3.5 days of flying.”

## **National Park Service**

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### **Glacier Park To Install Solar Panels At Apgar Visitor Center.**

The [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (2/12, Franz) reports that Glacier National Park “plans to install solar panels at the Apgar Visitor Center, thanks to a grant from the Glacier National Park Conservancy with money raised by Climate Ride, a Whitefish-based nonprofit.” Glacier Park spokesperson Lauren Alley “said the project is still in the design phase and no timeline has been set for the installation.” According to the article, “early plans call for the installation of 50 panels, 340 watts each, on the visitor center’s roof.”

### **Plan To Name Park For Nancy Reagan Faces Headwinds.**

The [AP](#) (2/13, Barakat) reports that “in one of Virginia’s most liberal jurisdictions, political leaders are just saying ‘no’ to a proposal in Congress to name a popular park for former first lady Nancy Reagan.” A House committee passed a resolution “last month to rename Gravelly Point Park, which sits on federal land adjacent to Ronald Reagan National Airport.” The proposal, however, is “not supported by political leaders in Arlington County, a suburb of the nation’s capital, where the park is located.” The National Park Service, “which operates the park, has not taken a position on the proposal.”

### **Ask 13: Why Do Parkway Locks Cost \$500 To Repair?**

[WLOS-TV](#) Asheville, NC (2/12, Fraboni) reports that a recent story about vandals "cutting locks at gates on the Blue Ridge Parkway" gave rise to the question why "repairs can cost as much as \$400 to \$500." Leesa Brandon, Blue Ridge Parkway Public Information Officer, said, "It's a great question. The lock itself is certainly not 500 dollars." Brandon explained, "However, when you factor in the repair of any broken gate parts, fabrication of new steel parts, and the personnel costs for investigation and repairs related to the vandalized gate, the costs begin to rise."

### **Mississippi Lands 4 Properties On National Register Of Historic Places.**

The [Jackson \(MS\) Clarion Ledger](#) (2/12) reports that "a historic African-American library in Clarksdale, a Jewish synagogue in Hattiesburg and two Jackson elementary schools have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places." The Interior Department "approved the Mississippi National Register Review Board's recommendation to add Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes, Temple B'nai Israel, and Casey and Spann Elementary schools, both of which are still in use."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/12).

### **Nevada Firehouses Added To National Register Of Historic Places.**

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/12, Brean) reports that "two firehouses built in the late 1920s in the Eastern Nevada communities of Ely and Pioche have been added to the National Register of Historic Places."

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Trump Declares State Of Emergency For American Samoa.**

An online [Fox News](#) (2/11, Chamberlain) article says an emergency declaration that President Trump signed on Sunday "allows...FEMA to coordinate" Tropical Storm Gita relief efforts in American Samoa. The [AP](#) (2/12, Perry) reports Trump's move allows FEMA "to provide equipment and resources to help...50,000" American Samoa residents recover from Gita-related problems. [Reuters](#) (2/11) also covers this story.

### **The Washington Report With Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett (EP.2).**

On [YouTube](#) (2/1), Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Doug Domenech appeared on the Washington Report With Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett for an interview.

### **Senate Backs Health Care Aid For Marshallese.**

The [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (2/9, Sun) reports that the Washington state Senate has "passed a bill to provide health care to Marshall Islanders who are residents of Washington, a measure designed to help the Marshallese who suffer health problems from nuclear tests the United States conducted near their islands in 1940-50." The legislation "would allow more people from countries belonging to the Compact of Free Association – an international agreement between the United States and the Pacific Island nations of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau – to receive health insurance." The Health Care Authority would "pay for premiums and out-of-pocket costs of individuals who are citizens of a COFA nation and current Washington residents, with incomes at or below 133 percent of the federal poverty level."

### **Guam Tourism Sets New Record In 2017.**

The [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (2/12) reports that "last year was a record-setting year for Guam tourism, based on preliminary visitor arrivals for December, according to the governor's office and the Guam Visitors Bureau." Guam welcomed "1.54 million visitors during the 2017 calendar year, making it the best year in the history of tourism on the island." The article notes that "according to GVB data, calendar year 2016 is now the second-best year, with 1.53 million arrivals, followed by calendar year 2015, with 1.4 million arrivals."

### **Billions Earmarked For Territory's Hurricane Recovery.**

[St. Croix Source](#) (2/11, Ellis) reports that "after a brief government shutdown, the U.S. Congress approved a \$300 billion dollar spending bill Friday to run the country, and included \$89 billion for hurricane and wildfire disaster recovery for Texas, Florida, California, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands." Gov. Kenneth Mapp said at a news conference Friday, "By what the U.S. Congress has

done and President Trump has done, we are calculating the benefit to the Virgin Islands will exceed \$7.5 billion for our recovery.” The article notes that “Mapp had previously said \$7.5 billion was the amount needed to pull the territory back together after two Category 5 hurricanes in September.”

## US Geological Survey

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### How To Strap A Bodycam To A Polar Bear.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/12, Brulliard) reports that “a recent study on polar bears in the Beaufort Sea came to a disheartening conclusion: Shrinking sea ice, caused by global warming, is forcing the lumbering predators to wander and swim farther to hunt the seals on which their bodies depend.” The study “entailed scientists outfitting nine female bears with high-tech collars, made of leather and plastic, that recorded activity levels and location.” In an interview, Anthony Pagano, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey who was the study’s lead author, talked about “just what it takes to strap a bodycam on a 400-pound carnivore.”

### Researchers Find Fracking Spurs Bigger Quakes At Different Depths.

The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (2/12, Legere) reports “five small earthquake sequences triggered by fracking in eastern Ohio between 2013 and 2015 were more complex than researchers previously understood, revealing that fracking-linked seismic disturbances originate at different geological depths and that deeper events pose greater risks.” The study, which was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, “uncovered interesting dynamics about the rare, but concerning, earthquakes associated with deep natural gas wells targeting the Utica and Point Pleasant shale formations that sit about two miles underground.” The study’s findings provide “clues that might eventually allow drilling companies to adapt their operations to avoid setting off earthquakes,” but “for now, the study suggests, stopping fracking temporarily may help head off more intense quakes once they have started.”

## Opinion Pieces

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### Offshore Energy Exploration Could Secure Florida’s Future: Guestview.

In an op-ed in the [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#), (2/12, Mica) David Mica, executive director of Florida Petroleum Council, says that even though there remains “uncertainty surrounding Florida’s role” in the federal offshore drilling plan since the Interior Department promised the state would be exempted, “it is still crucial that we continue to discuss the myriad of potential benefits of offshore exploration and production to Florida.” First and foremost, Mica says Florida should “embrace offshore exploration” in order to collect more accurate estimates of the oil and natural gas resources potentially within reach as part of a “safe, logical step” toward making decisions about the state’s economic and energy future. Moreover, Mica notes that the “timeline between the discovery of offshore resources and their production can be a decade or more,” which is why “we should act with judiciousness about our energy future and begin exploring now.”

### Additional Reading.

- *Protect National Monuments. They Boost Local Economies.* [Idaho Statesman](#) (2/12, Miller).
- *Maine’s Economy And Land Conservation Are Deeply Intertwined.* [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (2/12, Beahm).
- *Stay United Against Offshore Oil.* [Charleston \(SC\) Post and Courier](#) (2/13).
- *Drilling Reprieve – Paul Greenberg.* [Townhall](#) (2/13, Greenberg).
- *RESPONSE: Trump Budget And Infrastructure Plan Allows Sale Of National Parks And Public Land.* [KRWG-FM](#) Las Cruces, NM (2/12).

## Top National News

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### Trump Unveils \$1.5 Trillion Infrastructure Plan.

President Trump’s announcement Monday of a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure plan was ignored by the

network news broadcasts and receives relatively light print coverage this morning. While reports outline elements of the plan, the tone is largely negative, with many focusing on opposition from both sides of the aisle and questioning whether it will get enough support to pass.

The [Washington Times](#) (2/12, Miller) reports that Trump "pushed" the plan at a White House meeting "with a bipartisan group of state and local lawmakers, declaring that he would loosen the red tape that has a stranglehold on construction projects." [The Hill](#) (2/12, Shelbourne) says the plan, which "would focus on public-private partnerships and funding from state and local governments," is "structured around four main goals: generating \$1.5 trillion for an infrastructure proposal, streamlining the permitting process down to two years, investing in rural infrastructure projects and advancing workforce training."

According to the [New York Times](#) (2/12, Cohen), the plan, "which would create deficits of at least \$7.1 trillion over the next decade, includes \$200 billion in infrastructure spending," half of which "would go to incentives for states and cities," while "the other half would go to grants, loans and bonds to fund projects." Under the proposal, projects would be "eligible to receive up to 20 percent of its cost in federal funding. That means if a city or state wants to take on, say, a \$1 million project, it could potentially receive up to \$200,000 in federal funding if it's able to raise the other \$800,000 on its own."

[Politico](#) (2/12, Gurciullo) describes the Administration as "swinging for the fences" with the "\$1.5 trillion initiative that is light on new federal dollars – but could inspire a wave of toll roads, ease decades-old regulations and permanently change cities' and states' expectations for assistance from Washington." However, the plan "faces tough odds in Congress" as conservatives "are already expressing shock at Trump's total price tag, while Democrats say the share coming from the federal government would be too little to fill the backlog of crumbling roads, bridges, railroads, tunnels and airports, along with other needs like rural broadband service, veterans' hospitals, toxic waste cleanups and drinking water."

[Reuters](#) (2/12, Shepardson) also predicts "an uphill battle in Congress" and says Trump "made remarks that called into question how hard he will fight for it." Similarly, the [AP](#) (2/12, Thomas) says Trump "immediately raised doubts about how committed he was to delivering" on his campaign promise to rebuild the nation's infrastructure. Trump told the officials gathered at the White House, "If you want it badly, you're going to get it. ... And if you don't want it, that's OK with me too." Trump said of Congress, "If for any reason, they don't want to support to it, hey, that's going to be up to them. ... What was very important to me was the military, what was very important to me was the tax cuts, and what was very important to me was regulation."

The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (2/12, Marley) says the plan's "path through a polarized Congress isn't clear," and if it does make it through Congress, "it is unclear how Republicans who control Wisconsin's Capitol would react to it. They hope to secure more federal funds for projects, but many of them have resisted raising the state gas tax or finding other new money for roads – a key ingredient to secure some of the money Trump is offering."

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/12) says the price tag of Trump's plan will cause concern among Republicans, but his proposed regulatory reforms deserve consideration and could win support from some Democrats. A [USA Today](#) (2/12) editorial says that Trump's plan is "not such a crazy idea." While it is "in some ways a cop-out, recognizing the need for politically difficult revenue increases and then telling the states to do the heavy lifting," it would "at least push transportation in the direction it needs to go." USA Today urges Americans not to dismiss "Trump's concepts out of hand," and adds, "Say what you will about the president, he has a track record of knowing how to get stuff built."

In an accompanying op-ed in [USA Today](#) (2/12), Rep. Peter Defazio criticizes Trump's plan, saying it is "not a real infrastructure plan; it's simply another scam, an attempt by this administration to privatize critical government functions and create windfalls for Wall Street." Trump's "fake proposal will not address the serious infrastructure needs facing this country, so our potholed roads will get worse, our bridges and transit systems will become more dangerous, and we will pay more tolls." Defazio also touts House Democrats' "A Better Deal to Rebuild America," saying it is "five times bigger than President Trump's proposal." The plan "provides \$1 trillion in federal funding to rebuild our crumbling roads, bridges, transit systems, ports, harbors, airports and schools; extend high-speed Internet to every family in America; and put more than 16 million people to work."

Eugene Robinson writes in the [Washington Post](#) (2/12) that the Administration is "a great big fraud," and the latest "evidence of Trump's dishonesty comes in the budget and infrastructure plans the administration released Monday." While Trump "says he wants to spend just \$200 billion over 10 years on infrastructure, with cities and states providing the rest," Robinson argues that "mayors and governors don't have \$1.3 trillion lying around," and "since the \$200 billion is



supposed to come from savings elsewhere in the budget, Trump effectively plans to give with one hand and take away with the other."

Similarly, in his [New York Times](#) (2/12) column, Paul Krugman calls Trump's plan "a scam," arguing that the "\$1.5 trillion number is just made up; he's only proposing federal spending of \$200 billion, which is somehow supposed to magically induce a vastly bigger overall increase in infrastructure investment." Krugman suggests that Trump isn't "proposing something real" partly because "in practice Trump always defers to Republican orthodoxy, and the modern G.O.P. hates any program that might show people that government can work and help people," and also because he is "afraid to try anything substantive. To do public investment successfully, you need leadership and advice from experts. And this administration doesn't do expertise, in any field." The Administration, he adds, "probably couldn't put together a real infrastructure plan even if it wanted to. And that's why it didn't."

***Trump: Transit Permits Will Be Approved "So Fast Your Head Will Spin."*** The [Miami Herald](#) (2/12, Hanks, Daugherty) reports that the President "pledged environmental regulation wouldn't hold up Miami-Dade's quest for more rail projects," telling County Commission Chairman Esteban "Steve" Bovo, who attended Monday's White House event that federal permits will arrive "so fast your head will spin." Trump said, "We're going to get you the federal permits, OK? And we're going to get you the environmental and transportation permits. ... We'll get them for you so fast your head will spin. The question will be whether you can get the local permits. That's up to you."

***Democrats Say Trump Would Cut More From Infrastructure Than He Would Add.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/12, Wagner) reports that an analysis by Senate Democrats says Trump's 2019 budget blueprint, which was also released Monday, "would cut more federal spending" on infrastructure programs "than it would add." Senate Minority Leader Schumer's office "identified more than \$240 billion in proposed cuts over the coming decade to an array of existing infrastructure programs – a higher number than what Trump is proposing in 'new' spending." The cuts "include a \$122 billion reduction in outlays over the coming decade to the Highway Trust Fund," as well as reductions in "an array of programs that fund rail, aviation, wastewater and subsidized housing."

***Trump Plan Calls For Selling Off Reagan National, Dulles Airports.*** The [New York Post](#) (2/12, Schultz) reports that Trump's infrastructure plan calls for selling off Ronald Reagan Washington National and Dulles International Airports in the Washington, DC area. In addition, "the George Washington Memorial Parkway and Baltimore-Washington Parkway, as well as the Washington Aqueduct," are targeted for possible sale. The [Washington Post](#) (2/12, Laris) reports that the Administration "push to sell off federal assets as part of its infrastructure plan" also includes power transmission assets from the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Southwestern Power Administration, the Western Area Power Administration, and the Bonneville Power Administration.

### **Media Analyses: Trump Budget Would Boost Deficit, Unlikely To Be Adopted.**

Coverage of President Trump's Fiscal Year 2019 [budget proposal](#) is mostly critical. The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/12, lead story, 2:20, Glor) briefly mentioned the story at the top of its broadcast, reporting, "Some big numbers were rolled out in the nation's capital today. President Trump released a budget proposal worth \$4.4 billion, plus his plan to rebuild the country's infrastructure." Otherwise, there was no network coverage. Print and online reporting highlights the deficits the plan could create, and the unlikelihood that the plan will be approved by a skeptical Congress.

The [AP](#) (2/12, Taylor, Crutsinger) reports that the President "unveiled a \$4.4 trillion budget for next year that heralds an era of \$1 trillion-plus federal deficits and – unlike the plan he released last year – never comes close to promising a balanced ledger even after 10 years." The budget "proposes dramatic cuts to a wide range of domestic agencies," and, "unlike last year's submission...would cut Medicare by \$554 billion over the next 10 years."

[USA Today](#) (2/12, King, Groppe) writes that the budget plan "looks quite a bit like the fiscal 2018 budget which, by the way, wasn't very warmly received by congressional leaders last year who endorsed spending bills that rejected many of the cuts Trump recommended. ... Don't expect many of the proposals to go very far, especially in a year when most lawmakers are up for re-election." The [New York Times](#) (2/12, Davis) similarly says that the proposal "has little to no chance of being enacted as written" and "discards longtime Republican orthodoxy about balancing the budget, instead embracing last year's \$1.5 trillion tax cut and new spending on a major infrastructure initiative."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/12, Davidson) also says that one significant difference between this proposal and last year's is that it makes no attempt to balance the budget over the next

decade. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/12, Parsons) writes, "As a result, the budget marks something of a milestone – the Trump administration's abandonment of the quest for budget balance that the Republican Party has claimed as a guiding light for years, at least rhetorically." [Politico](#) (2/12, Ferris, Scholtes) says the proposal "is a jumble of mixed messages, since the Trump administration was forced to do some fast accounting after lawmakers on Friday cleared a massive two-year spending deal."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/12, Boyer) reports that OMB Director Mulvaney said in a statement, "As a nation, we face difficult times – challenged by a crumbling infrastructure, growing deficits, rogue nations, and irresponsible Washington spending. Through this budget proposal, it is clear that the President and this Administration are determined to reverse these trends, and ensure greater prosperity for the hard-working American taxpayer."

Prior to the White House announcement of the plan, House Majority Whip Scalise said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/12), "The main thing we've been focused on is trying to increase the defense spending to properly make sure our men and women in uniform have the tools they need. Frankly, they have not had those tools that they've needed." But the [Washington Post](#) (2/12, Paletta, Werner) reports that "the budget plan was met coolly by many Republicans." House Freedom Caucus Chairman Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) said, "Budgets are aspirational documents and seldom have a real impact on spending. ... I am not investing much time critiquing the budget when it has little to do with what Congress actually spends."

[Reuters](#) (2/12, Oliphant) reports that House Budget Committee ranking member Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY) was also critical, saying, "These cuts to critical federal investments are so extreme they can only reflect a disdain for working families and a total lack of vision for a stronger society." Other House Democrats weighed in on Twitter. Rep. Val Demings (D-FL) [tweeted](#), "If you rely on SNAP, Medicare, federal housing subsidies, and other assistance, the #TrumpBudget says a tax giveaway to the wealthiest 1% is more important." Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) [tweeted](#), "Looks like Mexico isn't paying for the wall after all. Trump's new budget forces taxpayers to foot the bill for his divisive, useless border wall." Rep. Jimmy Gomez (D-CA) [tweeted](#), "@realDonaldTrump's budget falls woefully short in meeting working families' needs. Adding insult to injury, #TrumpBudget calls for trillions in cuts to critical programs while somehow funding a mass #deportation agenda & sinking us further into debt." Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-IL) [tweeted](#), "After reviewing the #TrumpBudget and #Infrastructure Plan, it is clear that the President does not want to make America great for the #middleclass."

Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA) [tweeted](#), "After driving up the deficit with a tax plan that puts billionaires first, it is no surprise that the #TrumpBudget prioritizes cuts that will hurt hardworking Americans." Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY) [tweeted](#), "At its core, a budget is a moral document, and this one fails the American people." Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) [tweeted](#), "President Trump is once again proposing a budget that has little basis in reality and continues his ongoing assault on working families struggling to make ends meet." Reps. [Brendan Boyle](#) (D-PA), [Bill Pascrell](#) (D-NJ), and [David Price](#) (D-NC) all tweeted that the plan is "morally bankrupt."

Josh Boak of the [AP](#) (2/12) writes in an analysis, "One clear principle runs through [Trump's] emerging economic policy: Debt is good. ... The man who once called himself 'the king of debt' is trying to persuade Americans there's no price to pay for running trillion dollar budget deficits over the next few years." Boak says the plan "amounts to a gamble that nothing can slow a high-flying US economy and force a reckoning over the debt. Not higher interest rates. Not rising inflation. Not a foreign crisis. Not an aging US population. Not even – based on the budget plan's own estimates – an increase in the unemployment rate."

The [New York Times](#) (2/12) editorializes that as a presidential candidate, Trump "promised not to cut Medicare, Medicaid and other programs that benefit poor and middle-class families." On Monday, he "proposed a budget that would slash spending on Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, transportation and other essential government services, all while increasing the federal deficit." While "it will be tempting for some to dismiss Mr. Trump's budget as a marketing stunt" by Mulvaney, "presidential budgets are statements of principles. ... With this budget, the Trump administration is giving notice that it will do everything it can to torpedo the bipartisan budget deal, regardless of the needs of millions of Americans."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/12) editorializes, "Fiscal irresponsibility is the hallmark of populist governance. Whether ideologically left-wing (Hugo Chávez in Venezuela), right-wing (Juan Perón of Argentina) or in between, populists promise prosperity, dismiss trade-offs as so much elitist naysaying and spend their nations' savings to make it happen – at least temporarily. The hangover, economic and political, is always painful." Trump's "fiscal record so far is very much in the reckless spirit of such erstwhile Latin American strongmen."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/12) says in an editorial that the budget agreement reached last

week renders most of the President's proposal irrelevant, but also cautions that payments for individuals – a category including programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security – have been steadily increasing, and that appropriators must take heed.

Dana Milbank writes in his [Washington Post](#) (2/12) column, "Remember Trump's boast that he would 'get rid of the \$19 trillion in debt...over a period of eight years'? ... This is a comic-book budget – but not a terribly good one," in which Trump "promise[s] the stars" and proposes to "pay with peanuts." [The Hill](#) (2/12, Jagoda) and [Roll Call](#) (2/12, McCrimmon) also report on the budget plan.

### **Trump Jr.'s Wife Hospitalized After Opening Envelope Containing White Powder.**

Police say Donald Trump Jr.'s wife, Vanessa, "was taken to a New York City hospital as a precaution Monday," after opening an envelope that contained an unidentified white powder, [Bloomberg News](#) (2/12) reports. According to police, a preliminary test of the substance indicated that it was not dangerous. The [Washington Times](#) (2/12, Boyer) reports that the Secret Service confirmed that its agents in New York City and other law enforcement "are investigating a suspicious package addressed to one of our protectees."

According to police, the [AP](#) (2/12, Pearson) reports, "the envelope contained a letter," but they "provided no other details." The [New York Times](#) (2/12, Mueller) reports that the letter, "addressed to Donald Trump Jr., was sent to the Manhattan apartment of his mother-in-law, Bonnie Haydon."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (2/12, story 4, 0:25, Holt) cited "officials" who said "the letter was postmarked from the Boston area, and the powder is likely cornstarch." David Muir said in the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/12, lead story, 2:20) that the letter "expressed anger toward Trump Jr., reportedly addressing the son directly."

[Reuters](#) (2/12, Szekely) reports that a Fire Department spokeswoman said three patients were taken to the hospital for further observation. The [Daily Caller](#) (2/12, Datoc) says authorities "have not yet released what substance the Trump's received," but "none of the three individuals hospitalized in relation to the incident have dealt with any health issues" so far.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/12, Berman) reports that late Monday, Trump Jr. posted a [tweet](#) saying his wife and children are "safe and unharmed" and that it is "disgusting that certain individuals choose to express their opposing views with such disturbing behavior." The [New York Post](#) (2/12, Tacopino) reports that Trump Jr. later [tweeted](#), "A special thanks today to the great men & women of the @NYPDnews @FDNY @SecretService @NewYorkFBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force for their decisive action and incredible words of support to my wife and family. Their professionalism under pressure made a rough day manageable."

[Politico](#) (2/12, Nelson) reports that the President had spoken to his daughter-in-law, according to the White House. Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said, "I know the president spoke with her. ... Beyond that, at this point, it is an ongoing and active investigation so I can't comment any further. I can say that the president has spoken with her within the last hour." In a [tweet](#) Monday, Ivanka Trump, wrote, "Thinking of @MrsVanessaTrump & wishing I was by her side today. No one deserves to be frightened this way. There is no excuse."

*"Verified Left-Wing" Twitter Users Celebrate Incident.* [Breitbart](#) (2/12, Nash) cites several examples of "verified left-wing" Twitter users "celebrat[ing]" Mrs. Trump's hospitalization. [Breitbart](#) (2/12, Starr) also reports on the incident in a separate story, as did the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/12, story 2, 0:15, Glor).

### **Senate Begins Open-Ended Debate On Immigration.**

In what the [New York Times](#) (2/12, Stolberg) describes as "an exceedingly rare step," the Senate on Monday "began an open-ended debate on immigration" that "in effect, will allow senators to attempt to build a bill from scratch on the Senate floor." The Times says the "highly unusual debate," which will "unfold throughout the week, will test whether a series of legislative concepts and proposals championed by President Trump and a variety of Republicans and Democrats can garner 60 votes, the threshold for a measure to pass the Senate. No one has any idea how it will turn out." [Reuters](#) (2/12, Hurley) says Assistant Senate Majority Leader John Cornyn "put tight time constraints on the normally slow-moving Senate," saying, "It's this week or not at all." Cornyn "warned that the debate had to be 'wrapped up' by Thursday, before next week's congressional recess."

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (2/12, Lehman) says seven GOP senators were "set to introduce a bill Monday night that would implement the White House's immigration plan." [Bloomberg News](#) (2/12, Litvan) reports that in "an opening bid in what is likely to be an extended



debate," Senate Majority Leader McConnell "threw his support behind" the plan that would "provide a path to citizenship for about 1.8 million immigrants eligible for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which Trump is ending, and \$25 billion for border security, including a wall on the US-Mexico border." The proposal also "would follow Trump's plan to eliminate the ability of US citizens to sponsor siblings, parents, and adult or married children for green cards, a provision that Democrats contend would drastically cut legal immigration and disrupt families." [USA Today](#) (2/12, Collins) says McConnell called the measure a "balanced proposal" that "offers a compassionate resolution for 1.8 million illegal immigrants who were brought to the United States as children."

Deputy White House Press Secretary Hogan Gidley said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/12), "This President is the only one who is being sincere and trying to find a long lasting solution for the DACA problem. This President has come into office and in just a year's time has tackled some issues that have been dogging this country for the better part of 40 years. The immigration system is broken. This President knows it. ... We have to allow our border security agents the means and methods to keep our country safe. The Democrats do not do that. This President will."

Sen. David Perdue said on [Fox News Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (2/12), "This is a bill that is supported by the American people. Two-thirds of Americans want to end the DACA situation. ... They also want border security, end of chain migration, and end to diversity lottery. Seventy-one percent believe immigration should be based on the worker, the immediate family and the spouse alone. So this President has reached out and has got a bill or we have got a bill that the President will sign into law and actually will assure us be here again in a few short years."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/12, Ferrechio) says the bill "will compete against a measure introduced by Sens. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Minority Whip Dick Durbin, D-Ill., that would provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, but less than \$3 billion for border security and fewer restrictions on chain migration."

***Senate Democrats Have No Plan For Protecting Dreamers.*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/12, Dinan, Miller) reports that while Democrats have a "goal of protecting illegal immigrant Dreamers," they have "little strategy for how to get there, saying they will take their chances when the fight plays out on the floor of the Senate." Democratic leaders "don't have a Democratic plan in hand, nor do they have a sense for what concessions they are willing to make to reach a deal with President Trump, beyond some sort of funding for his border wall."

***McConnell, Schumer Trying To Set Aside Differences To Tackle Immigration.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/12, Kane) reports that McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Schumer "appear to be trying to put...contentious moments behind them" this week as they are "overseeing a wide-open debate on immigration and border security, a throwback to when the Senate used to be a more deliberative, and bipartisan, chamber." Said McConnell, "Actually, the Senate is a pretty collegial place. We don't dislike each other. ... We have to work together." The Post adds that the relationship between McConnell and Schumer "will surely be tested in the months ahead, and a true judgment might not come for years, but this week's immigration debate will be another big moment" as Schumer's "liberal base is clamoring for legislation giving a path to citizenship to 'dreamers,'" while McConnell "faces a right flank demanding tough border security and restrictions to legal immigration."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

***"Donald Trump's Nasty Budget."*** The [New York Times](#) (2/12) editorializes that as a presidential candidate, Trump "promised not to cut Medicare, Medicaid and other programs that benefit poor and middle-class families." On Monday, he "proposed a budget that would slash spending on Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, transportation and other essential government services, all while increasing the federal deficit." While "it will be tempting for some to dismiss Mr. Trump's budget as a marketing stunt" by Mulvaney, "presidential budgets are statements of principles. ... With this budget, the Trump administration is giving notice that it will do everything it can to torpedo the bipartisan budget deal, regardless of the needs of millions of Americans."

***"Close The Rape Loophole."*** The [New York Times](#) (2/12) editorializes that in October, two New York City police officers "were charged with kidnapping and raping an 18-year-old Brooklyn woman they had taken into custody." The Times adds that "the facts of the case are bad enough, but they also underscore another outrage: Vaguely written statutes in many states, including

New York, permit police officers to escape sexual assault charges by claiming that the victims consented to the act." The New York State Assembly last week "passed legislation to close that odious loophole – and the State Senate, which is considering the same bill, needs to swiftly follow suit," the Times argues, adding that "states across the country that may be letting police officers get away with rape need to revisit their statutes as well."

### **Washington Post.**

*"This Is The Opposite Of Responsible Government."* The [Washington Post](#) (2/12) editorializes, "Fiscal irresponsibility is the hallmark of populist governance. Whether ideologically left-wing (Hugo Chávez in Venezuela), right-wing (Juan Perón of Argentina) or in between, populists promise prosperity, dismiss trade-offs as so much elitist naysaying and spend their nations' savings to make it happen – at least temporarily. The hangover, economic and political, is always painful." Trump's "fiscal record so far is very much in the reckless spirit of such erstwhile Latin American strongmen."

*"Russia Is Betting It Can Push The US Out Of Syria. That Would Be Devastating."* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/12) writes that the "dangerous escalation of hostilities" in Syria that could lead to direct conflicts between the US, Turkey, Israel, Iran, and Russia "can be defused only by high-level diplomacy backed by the credible threat of force," but as yet "the Trump administration's response looks underpowered." The Post argues that Russia is part of all the fighting as Russian leader Vladimir Putin seeks to make his country "the dominant power in Syria and, by extension, a major player in the Middle East – all at the expense of the United States." The Post warns that Russia, Iran, and Turkey's plan to "push the United States out of Syria, allowing Turkey to overrun the Kurds, the Assad regime to regain full political control and Iran to dig in on Israel's northern border," will succeed "unless the Trump administration is prepared to make a larger military and diplomatic commitment."

*"The Death Of Two 'Heroes' Reveals Another Deadly Dimension Of Domestic Violence."* The [Washington Post](#) (2/12) editorializes that "the 911 call came into the suburban Ohio police department of Westerville at about noon Saturday," and "a woman could be heard crying before the phone was hung up." Two police officers "were sent to investigate and within minutes of arriving on the scene were shot." Both officers, Eric Joering, 39, and Anthony Morelli, 54, died, "leaving behind wives and children and a shell-shocked community." Their deaths "underscored the inherent danger that goes with police work," but also "punctuate another terrible fact; the scourge of domestic violence poses a threat not just to the victims who are being directly attacked but also to society at large." Domestic abuse "is not only a danger to individuals but also a threat to public safety that, if not confronted, diminishes us all."

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*"Trump's Big Public Works Dig."* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/12) says the price tag of President Trump's infrastructure plan will cause concern among Republicans, but his proposed regulatory reforms deserve consideration and could win support from some Democrats.

*"Jeffrey Bell."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/12) editorializes that conservative populist Jeffrey Bell, who passed away at age 74 on Saturday, had influential ideas that had a greater effect on American politics than those of most Senators. Speaking about considering Hispanics as natural GOP constituents, Bell once said, "Background doesn't matter...if you are articulating views that are populist, which I define as optimism about people and their ability to make their own decisions, as opposed to letting elites do it for them." The Journal reflects approvingly on Bell's ability to unify supply-side economic functions and the social right of American conservatism.

*"The Deficit Problem In A Chart."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/12) says in an editorial that the budget agreement reached last week renders most of the President's proposal irrelevant, but also cautions that payments for individuals – a category including programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security – have been steadily increasing, and that appropriators must take heed.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today's Front Pages.**

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Dow Jumps 400 Points On Rise In Oil Stocks](#)

[US, In Shift, Signals Readiness To Talk With North Korea](#)

[Walgreens Makes Takeover Approach To AmerisourceBergen](#)  
[Kraft Heinz Made Its Factories Really Efficient. Now It Has To Sell Bologna](#)

***New York Times:***

[Trump Budget Ignores Deficit With Increases For Military Infrastructure Plan Puts Burden On State And Private Sources](#)  
[Puerto Rican Storm Refugees To Lose Temporary Housing At White House, 34% Turnover Rate And Many Vacancies](#)  
[The Largest Oil Spill Of Its Type Imperils Asia's Best Fisheries](#)  
[A Night Out With North Korea's Cheerleaders: Matching Snowsuits, Military Discipline And Chaperoned Bathroom Trips](#)

***Washington Post:***

[At Least They'll Be Fed](#)  
[Trump Plan Includes Huge Budget Deficits](#)  
[Syria's War Mutates Into Regional Conflict](#)  
[2 Baltimore Detectives Guilty In Corruption Trial](#)  
[The Obamas' Portraits, Refreshing The Memory](#)

***Financial Times:***

[Global Equity Markets Establish Firmer Footing](#)  
[US Urges Allies To Help With Captured Foreign ISIS Fighters](#)  
[Trump Seeks 10 More Years To Balance US Budget](#)

***Washington Times:***

[Trump Releases Federal Budget With Big Increases For Military, Border Security](#)  
[Trump Falls Short On Budget-Cutting Promises](#)  
[Dossier's 10 Core Collusion Accusations Remain Unverified 20 Months Later](#)  
[Democrats Lack Plan, Concessions For Deal To Protect Dreamers As Immigration Debate Begins](#)  
[Ethanol Mandate Threatens Jobs, Could Lead To Price Spikes At Pumps, Oil Refiners Say](#)  
[Harvard, Berkeley Rank Among 10 Worst Schools For Free Speech](#)

***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** Trump Family-Terror Scare; WH Staffers; Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash; Detroit Police Standoff; House Intelligence Committee Memo; Winter Olympics; Ohio Officers Shot; USA Gymnastics Sex Abuse Trial; Baseball Star Arrested; New Flu Drug; Obama Portraits; Olympic Skater.

**CBS:** WH Staffers; Trump Family-Terror Scare; Undocumented Immigrant Father; Opioid Crisis; Ohio Officers Shot; Israel-Iran Relations; Winter Olympics; Flu Epidemic; Tanker Explosion; Movie Mishap; Robot Dog; Obama Portraits.

**NBC:** Winter Olympics; US-North Korea Relations; WH Staffers; Trump Family-Terror Scare; Opioid Crisis; Facebook-Fake News; Wall Street News; Olympic Snowboarder; Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash; Obama Portraits; Musician Dies; Tanker Explosion; Korean Traditional Song.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

WH Staffers – 8 minutes, 50 seconds  
Winter Olympics – 6 minutes, 30 seconds  
Obama Portraits – 3 minutes, 25 seconds  
Trump Family-Terror Scare – 3 minutes

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Winter Olympics; WH-Budget Plan; Trump Family-Terror Scare; Baltimore Police Corruption.

**CBS:** WH-Budget Plan; Immigration Deal; Winter Olympics; Wall Street News; Dog Show.

**FOX:** Immigration Deal; WH-Budget Plan; Grand Canyon Helicopter Crash; North-South Korea Relations.

**NPR:** WH-Budget Plan; Pennsylvania-Gerrymandering; Winter Olympics; Wall Street News.

**Washington Schedule**

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## Today's Events In Washington.

### White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — No public schedule announced.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Delivers remarks at the National Museum of African American History and Culture; tours the National Museum of African American History and Culture; participates in the Senate Republican Policy Lunch.

**US Senate:** 9:30 AM Agency chiefs testify to Senate Intelligence Committee on worldwide threats – Hearing on 'Worldwide Threats', with testimony from Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats; CIA Director Mike Pompeo; National Security Agency Director Adm. Michael Rogers; FBI Director Christopher Wray; Defense Intelligence Agency Director Robert Ashley; and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) Director Robert Cardillo Location: Hart Senate Office Building, Rm 216, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

10:00 AM Senate HELP Committee hearing on reauthorization of FDA animal drug user fees – Hearing on 'Improving Animal Health: Reauthorization of FDA Animal Drug User Fees', with testimony from Food and Drug Administration Center for Veterinary Medicine Director Steven Solomon Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Hearing on 'President's FY 2019 Budget Proposal', with testimony from Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 608, Washington, DC <http://budget.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SenateBudget>

2:00 PM 'Vehicle Battery Sustainability: Recycling 2 Million More' briefing – 'Vehicle Battery Sustainability: Recycling 2 Million More' Responsible Battery Coalition briefing, sponsored by Senate Auto Caucus Co-Chair Republican Sen. Rob Portman, featuring Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Sustainable Technologies and Health Program Director Dr Ramon Sanchez, Johnson Controls Executive Director of Sustainability, Industry, and Government Affairs Adam Muellerweiss, Lafarge Canada Head of Environment and Public Affairs – Canada Jonathan Moser, AutoZone Vice President for Government and Community Relations Ray Pohlman, Advance Auto Parts Senior Manager of Environmental Affairs Micah Thompson, and Responsible Battery Coalition Executive Director Pat Hayes Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC-214, Washington, DC [www.responsiblebatterycoalition.org](http://www.responsiblebatterycoalition.org) <https://twitter.com/respbattery>

2:30 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

2:30 PM Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on DoD's role in protecting democratic elections – Cybersecurity Subcommittee hearing on 'Department of Defense's role in Protecting Democratic Elections', with testimony from Cyber Strategies co-founder and Managing Director Robert Butler; Center for Strategic and International Studies Europe Program Director Heather Conley; University of Cincinnati Political Science Department Head Dr Richard Harknett; and Harvard University Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs Cyber Security Project Director Dr Michael Sulmeyer Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 222, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

Special Olympics Capitol Hill Day – Special Olympics Capitol Hill Day, with athletes from across the nation meeting their members of Congress to discuss work Special Olympics is doing in the fields of inclusive sport, health, and education. Over 250 face-to-face meetings with both House and Senate members are held, with the athletes challenging and inviting their elected officials to partner with them to achieve the goals of expanding Unified Champion Schools programming throughout the U.S., and to end healthcare disparities and discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities Location: Washington, DC <http://www.specialolympics.org/> <https://twitter.com/SpecialOlympics>

**US House:** 8:30 AM House Speaker Paul Ryan joins Fox Business Network's 'Mornings with Maria' to talk about how tax reform Location: TBD [www.speaker.gov](http://www.speaker.gov) <https://twitter.com/SpeakerRyan>

11:00 AM House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer regular pen-and-pad briefing Location: H-144, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC [www.democraticwhip.gov/](http://www.democraticwhip.gov/) <https://twitter.com/WhipHoyer>

2:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including consideration of legislation including 'H.R. 3542 – Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act', as amended, 'H.Res. 129 – Calling on the Department of Defense, other elements of the Federal Government, and foreign governments to intensify efforts to investigate, recover, and identify all missing and unaccounted-for personnel of the United States', as amended, 'H.R. 4376 – Department of Energy Research Infrastructure Act of 2018', as amended, 'H.R. 4377 – Accelerating American Leadership in Science Act of 2018', as amended, 'H.R. 4378 – Nuclear Energy Research Infrastructure Act of 2018', as amended, 'H.R. 4675 –

Low-Dose Radiation Research Act of 2018', as amended, 'H.R. 3397 – Building Blocks of STEM Act', as amended, and 'H.R. 4979 – To extend the Generalized System of Preferences and to make technical changes to the competitive need limitations provision of the program', as amended, under suspension of the rules Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC  
<http://www.house.gov/>

Special Olympics Capitol Hill Day – Special Olympics Capitol Hill Day, with athletes from across the nation meeting their members of Congress to discuss work Special Olympics is doing in the fields of inclusive sport, health, and education. Over 250 face-to-face meetings with both House and Senate members are held, with the athletes challenging and inviting their elected officials to partner with them to achieve the goals of expanding Unified Champion Schools programming throughout the U.S., and to end healthcare disparities and discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities Location: Washington, DC <http://www.specialolympics.org/>  
<https://twitter.com/SpecialOlympics>

**Other:** 7:30 AM National Congress of American Indians Executive Council Winter Session continues – National Congress of American Indians 2018 Executive Council Winter Session (aka Tribal Nations Legislative Summit) continues, with speakers today including Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, Treasurer Jovita Carranza, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Democrats Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto and Reps. Raul Grijalva and Norma Torres, and Republicans Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Reps. Jack Bergman, Darrell Issa, Don Young, Steve Pearce Location: Capital Hilton, Washington, DC <http://www.ncai.org/> <https://twitter.com/NCAI1944>

8:00 AM NAST Legislative Conference continues – National Association of State Treasurers Legislative Conference continues, with speakers today including Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy and Republican Rep. Randy Hultgren Location: Grand Hyatt Washington, 1000 H St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.nast.net/>

10:30 AM Brookings discussion on 'The new generation of Afghan women leaders' – 'The new generation of Afghan women leaders' Brookings Institution Foreign Policy program discussion, held in collaboration with the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security and the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council, with members of a visiting delegation of the current Afghan Govt: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs Adela Raz, Ministry of Finance Deputy Minister for Policy Naheed Sarabi, Ministry of Mines and Petroleum Deputy Minister Ghaal Habibyar-Safi, President's Senior Advisor on High Councils Shararad Akbar, President's Administrative Office Director of Policy and Analysis Naheed Esar, Independent Commission for Overseeing the Implementation of the Constitution of Afghanistan Commissioner Ghizaal Haress, Provincial Council of Kabul Province Member Dr Zohra Nawabi, and Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission Appointment Board Commissioner Muqaddessa Yourish Location: SEIU: Headquarters & Conference Center, 1800 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.brookings.edu> <https://twitter.com/BrookingsInst>

2:00 PM Bipartisan Reps. David Brat and Jamie Raskin speak at AU on bipartisanship in President Trump's America – Republican Rep. David Brat and Democratic Rep. Jamie Raskin speak on 'Is Bipartisanship Possible in Trump's America?' at American University, discussing their political philosophies and visions for the U.S., what drove them into public service, their assessment of the political climate in the House of Representatives, and the prospects for cooperation between principled progressives and conservatives Location: American University, Constitution Hall, 4400 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.american.edu](http://www.american.edu)  
<https://twitter.com/AmericanU>

2:30 PM Smithsonian accepts GOP Rep. Sam Johnson's Vietnam POW possessions – Smithsonian's National Museum of American History accepts two objects from Republican Rep. Sam Johnson that 'represent his seven-year imprisonment as a POW in North Vietnam' – a tube of toothpaste and his tin cup from the Hoa Lo Prison. Other attendees include National Museum of American History Director John Gray and Armed Forces History Division Chair Jennifer Jones Location: Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, 14th St and Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://americanhistory.si.edu> <https://twitter.com/amhistorymuseum>

6:30 PM Annual Friends of National Service Awards Reception – Friends of National Service Awards Reception, honoring leaders in govt, business, and journalism, based on 'recognition and support for national service as a solution to some of the nation's most pressing challenges'. This year's honorees include Democratic Rep. Doris Matsui (Edward M. Kennedy National Service Lifetime Leadership Award), Republican Sen. John McCain (Service to Country Award), Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy and Democratic Sen. Chris Coons (Distinguished Service Award), Republicans Sen. Roy Blunt, and Reps. Susan Brooks and Billy Long, and Democratic Sen. Patty Murray (Congressional Service Award), Republican Sen. John Kennedy and Democratic Rep. Pramila

Jayapal (Outstanding New Member Award), Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander (Franklin D. Roosevelt Service and Conservation Corps Leadership Award), and Washington Governor Jay Inslee and Louisiana Lieutenant Governor William Nungesser (State Leadership Award) Location: Union Station, 50 Massachusetts Avenue Northeast, Washington, DC [www.voicesforservice.org](http://www.voicesforservice.org) <https://twitter.com/Voices4Service>

Portraits of Barack and Michelle Obama go on display to public at Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery – Portraits of former President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama go on display to the public at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery following yesterday's press unveiling. Kehinde Wiley's portrait of President Obama goes on permanent display in the 'America's Presidents' exhibition, while Amy Sherald's depiction of Michelle is situated in the museum's Recent Acquisitions corridor, through early November 2018 Location: National Portrait Gallery, 8th and F Sts NW, Washington, DC <http://www.npg.si.edu/> <https://twitter.com/npg>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

*Jimmy Kimmel:* "Today is an important day in American history. Today is Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Abraham Lincoln was born 209 years ago. Of course, he was tragically assassinated at Ford's Theater in Washington by a member of MS-13."

*Jimmy Kimmel:* "The White House now says they can't release the counter-memo written by Democrats because of, quote, 'national security concerns.' Does he realize he is our national security concern? ... The President can't spend all day poring over memos. He's got wife beaters to defend on Twitter. Okay?"

*Jimmy Kimmel:* "On Friday night, there was a cyber attack in Pyeongchang. Someone attacked the official Olympic website and took out Wi-Fi in the stadium during the opening ceremonies, which was devastating. Thousands of people had to wait until they got back to their hotels to post to Instagram. It was a real mess."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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- Associated Press: Trump Fights Releasing Details On National Monument Decision.
- Daily Caller: Trump Guts Obama-Era Methane Rules To 'Allow Job Growth In Rural America'.
- Adirondack (NY) Daily Enterprise: Federal Bill Would Put Thousands Of People To Work On Public Lands.
- Daily Caller: Elizabeth Warren Absent From Tribal Nations Policy Summit.
- Washington Times: Federal Employees Warned Against Political Social Media Posts.

### Bureau Of Indian Affairs



- Arrest Made In Fatal Shooting Of Oglala Sioux Police Officer.

### **Bureau Of Indian Education**

- Energy Funds For Schools New Twist In Tribal Budget Battle.
- Government Failing To Background Employees At Indian Schools.
- VP At SIPI Accused Of Assault And Harassment.

### **Bureau Of Land Management**

- Denver Post: Mesa County Commissioners Urge Trump Administration To Move BLM Headquarters To Grand Junction.
- Deseret (UT) News: Little Sahara Recreation Area Visitor Center Reopens.
- KIVI-TV Boise (ID): BLM To Hold Meetings On Owyhee County Plan.

### **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

- RI's Democratic Leaders Criticize Offshore Drilling Plan.
- South Carolina Debates Offshore Drilling.

### **Fish And Wildlife Service**

- Alabama Live: Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge Adds 251 Acres On Fort Morgan Peninsula.
- Sunshine State (FL) News: SFWMD Parcel Swap With USFWS Keeps Everglades Restoration Strategies On Target.
- Washington Examiner: Nation's Largest Flower Show Tackles Water Concerns.

### **National Park Service**

- Washington Post: After Ghaisar Killing, Park Police Chief Backs Out Of Meeting On Bill Requiring Body Cams.
- WRC-TV Washington: 'A Piece Of History': NPS To Celebrate Frederick Douglass' 200th Birthday At Historic Home.
- Athens (GA) Banner-Herald: Kettle Creek Battlefield Site Park Triples In Size.
- Grand Canyon (AZ) News: NPS Seeks Public Comment On Proposed Inter-Tribal Cultural Site At Desert View.
- Outer Banks (NC) Voice: Hatteras Lighthouse In The Dark For More Than A Month.
- Roanoke (VA) Times: Blue Ridge Parkway Viaduct And Other Sections Closed In North Carolina.
- Queens (NY) Gazette: Ridgewood Reservoir Now Listed On The National Register Of Historic Places.

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- New York Times: Seoul: US Willing To Hold Direct Talks With North Korea.
- USA Today: Trump Donates Fourth-Quarter Salary To DOT As Infrastructure Push Continues.
- Financial Times: IAE: US On Track To Become World's Largest Oil Producer.
- The Hill: Experts Believe EPA Will Continue Easing Of Enforcement Under Trump Administration.

### **Editorial Wrap-Up**

- New York Times.
  - "Is North Korea Causing Trouble Or Giving Peace A Chance?"
  - "An End To Gaza's Misery Is As Elusive As Peace."
- Washington Post.
  - "The Stakes In The DACA Debate Could Not Be Higher."
  - "Release The Democratic Memo, Republicans, And Prove You're Really Transparent."
  - "Here's An Idea For Infrastructure Week: Bring 911 Into The 21st Century."



- Wall Street Journal.
  - "Trump And The Dreamers."
  - "Russian Meddling This Election."
  - "Kelly And The Chaos."

### Big Picture

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### Last Laughs

- Late Night Political Humor.

## DOI In The News

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### Trump: Gut Funding For Climate Science, Boost Fossil Fuels.

The [AP](#) (2/13, Biesecker) reports that the White House's proposed budget seeks to "reduce or eliminate climate science programs across an array of federal agencies" while "boosting the continued burning of planet-warming fossil fuels." The AP says the budget is a "direct indicator of just how little weight his administration is giving to the increasingly dire warnings from climate scientists" about the impacts of climate change. The plan has been roundly opposed by environmentalists and climate scientists, who say the deep budget cuts, "if implemented, would amount to suppressing facts about global warming while turning up the Earth's thermostat by pumping more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere."

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/13) reports that the U.S. Geological Survey "would receive just under \$860 million, about a 20 percent decrease from funding levels enacted for fiscal 2017." The request is "\$62 million less than it asked for last year to fund USGS." The proposal "includes \$13 million to fund only three of the eight regional climate science centers and one national climate adaptation science center – the others would presumably close." The article notes "that is \$4.4 million less than the administration allocated in its fiscal 2018 budget proposal and less than half of what Congress enacted for fiscal 2017."

***Trump Backs Off Proposal To Cut Royalty Payments To Texas, Other States For Gulf Oil.*** The [Houston Chronicle](#) (2/12) reports that in a Monday budget proposal, the Trump Administration maintained an agreement to continue sharing offshore drilling oil revenues with Gulf Coast states. The Trump administration "preserved the revenue sharing agreement, which was expected to deliver \$275 million to Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi this year." Meanwhile, The funds are allocated "under the law to protecting the Gulf coastline, with money directed to maintaining levees and other infrastructure, hurricane relief and preventing further erosion of wetlands that are fast disappearing along the Gulf Coast." Sen. Bill Cassidy said, "I'm glad the administration heard us loud and clear and decided to support offshore revenue sharing. After years of our concerns falling on deaf ears, it's refreshing to have an administration that actually listens."

***Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Said To Bolster U.S. Offshore Strategy.*** [UPI](#) (2/13, Graeber) reports that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management "said the 2019 budget plan helps ensure energy dominance, but its funding is only a small fraction of the outline." BOEM "has \$179.3 million proposed in the 2019 budget, which the agency said supports executive action supporting a stronger U.S. energy sector." Acting BOEM Director Walter Cruickshank said in a statement, "It recognizes BOEM's vital role in advancing responsible offshore energy development as part of the administration's comprehensive effort to secure the Nation's energy future, benefit the economy, and create jobs," acting BOEM Director Walter Cruickshank said in a statement.

***Environmentalists Declare War On Trump's 2019 Budget.*** [Courthouse News](#) (2/13, Renda) reports that "environmentalists blasted" the White House's 2019 budget on Tuesday, "saying proposed cuts to programs designed to protect endangered species essentially amount to a death sentence." The budget request "proposes massive cuts to several endangered species programs including protections for vital habitat, which received \$20.5 million last year." Furthermore, the article says, "the budget proposes a 17 percent reduction for the part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that studies potentially endangered species and ultimately decides whether or not they should be listed."

***Interior Department Reorganization, Budget Prompts Concerns From Democrats, Republicans.***

The [Elko \(NV\) Daily Free Press](#) (2/14, Rothberg) reports that "Nevada politicians across the political spectrum raised concerns Monday about a Department of Interior budget request that, if implemented by Congress, could affect how the federal public land agency operates and funds conservation projects." The reorganization, "which was announced publicly last month, came as a surprise to county commissioners and governors from Western states, where the Interior Department manages about 700,000 square miles."

### **Trump Fights Releasing Details On National Monument Decision.**

The [AP](#) (2/13, Ridler) reports that the federal government argues "it does not have to release documents involving legal arguments for President Donald Trump's decision to shrink national monuments because they are protected presidential communications." The Department of Justice "made a more detailed request of a federal judge in Idaho last week to dismiss a lawsuit from an environmental law firm, one of several tied to the monument reductions." Making the documents public "would disrupt the president's ability to carry out his constitutional responsibilities," the filing says.

### **Trump Guts Obama-Era Methane Rules To 'Allow Job Growth In Rural America'.**

The [Daily Caller](#) (2/13, White) reports that Interior Department official Joe Balash said the BLM's proposed methane rule strikes the right balance between responsible energy production and smart regulations, and "will allow job growth in rural America." The Interior Department "believes the regulation was redundant and damaged industry inside rural parts of the country."

### **Federal Bill Would Put Thousands Of People To Work On Public Lands.**

The [Adirondack \(NY\) Daily Enterprise](#) (2/13, LEVINE) reports that "two bills making their way through the U.S. House and Senate could put tens of thousands of people aged 16 to 30 to work to 'conserve, restore and enhance the great outdoors of the United States.'" The 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act of 2017 "would amend a 1993 law to encourage enlarging a group of young adults and veterans that would tackle maintenance on public lands throughout the U.S." Ideally, the article says, the House bill – supported "by Republicans and Democrats, and paired with similar legislation in the Senate – would engage youth and vets in conservation work, increase public access to public and tribal lands, and conserve and restore natural and historic resources."

### **Elizabeth Warren Absent From Tribal Nations Policy Summit.**

The [Daily Caller](#) (2/13, Athey) reports that the National Congress of American Indians Tribal Nations Policy Summit is "taking place in Washington, DC, this week, and it features a whole host of politicians and high-profile speakers, including House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein." But Sen. Elizabeth Warren, "who has claimed to be Native American, is conspicuously absent."

### **Federal Employees Warned Against Political Social Media Posts.**

The [Washington Times](#) (2/13, Swoyer) reports, "Federal employees can check their social media accounts on their own phones during work breaks, but cannot 'like,' 'share,' 'follow' or otherwise show support for political candidates or parties, according to new guidance released Tuesday" by the Office of Special Counsel. While away from work, "employees are generally free to use their social media accounts as they like. But they would run afoul of the Hatch Act, which prevents employees from politicking on government time, if they promote politicians while on work time. Using Twitter accounts to raise money is illegal no matter when it happens, said the Office of Special Counsel."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Arrest Made In Fatal Shooting Of Oglala Sioux Police Officer.**

The [AP](#) (2/13) reports that "authorities have made an arrest in the fatal shooting of an Oglala Sioux police officer." Officer Brian Garrett was "shot about 4 a.m. Saturday in what investigators believe to be a domestic dispute while he was off duty." The FBI, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Oglala Sioux police are investigating. The tribe's Department of Public Safety "says in a statement that an arrest has been made, but no other details are being released while the investigation continues."

## Bureau Of Indian Education

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### Energy Funds For Schools New Twist In Tribal Budget Battle.

[Law360](#) (2/13, Westney) reports that "the Trump administration's proposed 2019 budget proposes a multibillion-dollar boost for repairing Bureau of Indian Education schools with revenue from energy development on federal lands, but raises concerns about how the plan would work and whether other tribal funding priorities will get short shrift, attorneys say."

### Government Failing To Background Employees At Indian Schools.

The [Sioux Falls \(SD\) Argus Leader](#) (2/13, Ellis) reports that the Bureau of Indian Education is "failing to provide adequate criminal background checks on employees and volunteers working with Native American children, a federal audit has found." The findings from the Interior Department's Office of Inspector General "raise concerns that unsuitable people are in contact with students in 51 BIE operated schools and 130 tribally operated schools." The watchdog's report says, "In this evaluation, we found that the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is not ensuring that required background checks for individuals who work with children at Indian education facilities are complete and being reinvestigated on schedule, leaving children vulnerable to contact with persons who would be determined to be unfit based on a completed background check."

### VP At SIPI Accused Of Assault And Harassment.

[KUNM-FM](#) Albuquerque, NM (2/13, Demarco) reports that the vice president of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, a community college in Albuquerque that's run by the Interior Department, has been "accused of sexual assault by a staff member." The article notes that "other complaints about Eric Christensen's behavior have been filed over the course of his long federal career, according to a recent news story in Government Executive, an independent news publication."

Meanwhile, [KJZZ-FM](#) Phoenix (2/13, Gilger) reports that "employees of the Interior Department's Bureau of Indian Education shared their stories of harassment by male superiors on the job and the retaliation they say resulted from speaking out."

## Bureau Of Land Management

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### Mesa County Commissioners Urge Trump Administration To Move BLM Headquarters To Grand Junction.

The [Denver Post](#) (2/13, Paul) reports that Mesa County's commissioners t"his week formally urged the Trump administration, as well as Colorado's governor and congressional delegation, to push for the relocation of the Bureau of Land Management's headquarters to Grand Junction." The three commissioners said in their resolution, "It is in the best interest of counties to have the people who manage our BLM lands, and who make the decisions concerning these lands, living within the communities with high percentages of BLM land."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Denver Business Journal](#) (2/13, Harden, Proctor).

### Little Sahara Recreation Area Visitor Center Reopens.

The [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/13) reports that the Bureau of Land Management's Fillmore field office will "reopen the Little Sahara Recreation Area Visitor Center on Sunday." Also, "all four campgrounds will be open with access to vault toilets."

### BLM To Hold Meetings On Owyhee County Plan.

[KIVI-TV](#) Boise, ID (2/13, Bertel) reports that the Bureau of Land Management is "beginning a study to find any possible environmental impacts of a proposed travel management plan for public lands in western Owyhee County." The bureau has "scheduled a six-week public comment period and two public meetings to help identify appropriate areas for motorized and non-motorized recreation." Acting BLM Owyhee Field Manager Brian Thrift said, "This Travel Management Plan effort is an example of working with our partners and the public to promote multiple-use activities on public lands – by ensuring access for traditional land uses, such as grazing, and for recreational activities – while being mindful of areas with resource concerns."

## Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

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### RI's Democratic Leaders Criticize Offshore Drilling Plan.

The [AP](#) (2/12) reports a group of Democratic politicians from Rhode Island, including Gov. Gina Raimondo, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, and Reps. David Cicilline and Jim Langevin "are asking Rhode Islanders to voice their concerns about...the Trump administration's plan to allow drilling off the coast." The politicians believe "drilling would threaten the state's 400 miles of coastline and sensitive marine ecosystems and could have lasting environmental and economic repercussions." The Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is slated to hold a public hearing in Rhode Island on February 28.

### South Carolina Debates Offshore Drilling.

[Maritime Executive](#) (2/13) reports that "more than 200 protesters" rallied in front of the South Carolina Statehouse on Tuesday in a show of opposition to the federal offshore drilling plan. Meanwhile, Lt. Gov. Kevin Bryant, who is running for governor, said he supports offshore energy exploration, saying, "We've got to find out what's out there... Do the math. Find the risks, weigh it against the benefits, then make an informed decision." Similarly, South Carolina Petroleum Council Executive Director Mark Harmon said, "We can't effectively analyze America's energy potential without exploring off the shore of South Carolina to see what resources exist."

## Fish And Wildlife Service

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### Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge Adds 251 Acres On Fort Morgan Peninsula.

[Alabama Live](#) (2/13, Pillion) reports that "Alabama has partnered with federal wildlife officials and nonprofit groups to add 251 acres of sensitive coastal marshes, creeks and forests to the popular Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge's Little Point Clear Unit on the Fort Morgan Peninsula in Baldwin County." The Conservation Fund "recently purchased and transferred the property to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the request of the FWS and the state of Alabama for addition to the Refuge." Jerome Phillips, Refuge Complex Manager with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said, "We are so fortunate to have partners in conservation such as NFWF, The Conservation Fund, and the State of Alabama. ... Acquiring this property will ensure that a large, contiguous tract of wildlife habitat is protected forever for the benefit of the American people."

### SFWMD Parcel Swap With USFWS Keeps Everglades Restoration Strategies On Target.

The [Sunshine State \(FL\) News](#) (2/13) reports that the South Florida Water Management District and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have "finalized an agreement to exchange two parcels of land near the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in western Palm Beach County." SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Dan O'Keefe said, "Completing this land swap is a big step forward in the state's ongoing and incredibly successful efforts to restore the health of Florida's Everglades." The District claims the deal will "keep Gov. Rick Scott's Restoration Strategies Plan on track to hit its 2025 completion target for design and construction of water treatment and storage projects."

### Nation's Largest Flower Show Tackles Water Concerns.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/13, Bedard) reports that Philadelphia is "hosting the nation's largest annual flower show and this year the Philadelphia Horticultural Society is using that platform to promote sustainable water solutions." The March 3-11 Philadelphia Flower Show is "venturing into new territory in joining with the William Penn Foundation to host a daylong water summit March 7 to promote clean rivers, recreation and maybe politics and concerns the administration is watering down Obama-era rules." Tylar Greene, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge in Philadelphia, "plans to talk up efforts to work with groups to get people outdoors and onto rivers."

## National Park Service

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### After Ghaisar Killing, Park Police Chief Backs Out Of Meeting On Bill Requiring Body Cams.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, Jackman) reports that "after proposing legislation that would require all uniformed federal police to be equipped with body cameras and in-car cameras, Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton and Rep. Don Beyer asked for a meeting with U.S. Park Police Chief Robert MacLean to get his input on the idea." Norton was motivated "to pursue such a law after seeing the video of the fatal Park Police shooting of Bijan Ghaisar in November, footage captured by a Fairfax County officer but not Park Police officers, who are not equipped with cameras." MacLean agreed to the meeting, but after Norton "issued a news release saying she would discuss their meeting with the media, MacLean backed out, Norton said Tuesday." Norton and Beyer "met with the media anyway, 'to express our astonishment' at MacLean's absence and at his explanation that he was not allowed to lobby Congress on such matters."

### **'A Piece Of History': NPS To Celebrate Frederick Douglass' 200th Birthday At Historic Home.**

[WRC-TV](#) Washington (2/13, Jones) reports that the National Park Service this weekend will kick off "a yearlong celebration of the 200th anniversary" of abolitionist Frederick Douglass' birth. Cedar Hill, the home of Douglass, "will be the epicenter of the National Park Service's bicentennial celebration of Douglass' life." According to Vince Vaise, the chief of visitor services for the National Park Service, "the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site in Anacostia has already seen an increase in visitors interested in learning more about the famous orator."

Additional coverage was provided by [WRC-TV](#) Washington (2/13, Jones).

### **Kettle Creek Battlefield Site Park Triples In Size.**

The [Athens \(GA\) Banner-Herald](#) (2/13, Ford) reports that the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park "tripled in size following the recent acquisition of 180 adjacent acres officials hailed on Monday as a significant measure in preserving the Revolutionary War site." A news conference was held Tuesday in Wilkes County to announce the park enlargement. Rep. Jody Hice "told the gathering he supported the America Battlefield Protection legislation, which provided the matching grant money for the acquisition."

### **NPS Seeks Public Comment On Proposed Inter-Tribal Cultural Site At Desert View.**

The [Grand Canyon \(AZ\) News](#) (2/13) reports that the National Park Service is seeking public input "on a proposal to modify facilities at Desert View to create an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site." The proposal will "provide opportunities for first-voice cultural interpretation from associated American Indian Tribes-including cultural demonstrations and enhance visitor orientation to the cultural significance of the site and park while helping inform visitors about tourism opportunities on surrounding tribal lands." The NPS is "proposing some modifications to existing infrastructure, some demolition of underutilized facilities, and potential new construction within the existing developed footprint at Desert View."

### **Hatteras Lighthouse In The Dark For More Than A Month.**

The [Outer Banks \(NC\) Voice](#) (2/13, Crist) reports that the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse has "been turned off for roughly a month now due to damage from a wave of January storms." According to the article, "though it was not clear which exact storm caused the lighting issue, whether it was the early January storm or the severe thunderstorms on January 12, the damage was reported by the weekend of January 13 to the National Park Service and the U.S. Coast Guard." The NPS "manages the lighthouse itself, while the U.S. Coast Guard maintains the operation of the light."

### **Blue Ridge Parkway Viaduct And Other Sections Closed In North Carolina.**

The [Roanoke \(VA\) Times](#) (2/13, Berrier) reports that the National Park Service "announced that the Linn Cove Viaduct will be closed for repaving and bridge maintenance from March 1 until May 24." As a result, "tourists will have to take a few detours when driving the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina during the next three months."

### **Ridgewood Reservoir Now Listed On The National Register Of Historic Places.**

The [Queens \(NY\) Gazette](#) (2/14) reports that the National Park Service has added the Ridgewood Reservoir to the National Register of Historic Places.

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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## **Migrant Funding Faces Cut, Defense Spending Goes Up Under Trump Plan.**

The [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/13) reports that "Guam and the other U.S. territories are facing an 18 percent cut in federal funding from the U.S. Department of the Interior under President Donald Trump's 2019 budget request." President Trump's proposed budget for the Office of Insular Affairs "reduces technical assistance to the territories by \$2 million, cuts the brown tree snake control program by \$639,000, and reduces the coral reef initiative and natural resources funding by \$296,000." In addition, Guam Del. Madeleine Bordallo "said the president's budget request also would eliminate \$3 million in discretionary Compact-impact funding."

[Marianas Variety](#) (2/14) reports that Bordallo said, "I am disappointed the president's budget makes significant cuts to the Office of Insular Affairs for programs that directly benefit Guam and the other territories. Our communities are already struggling with constrained budgets, and the tax law enacted last year by congressional Republicans and the Trump administration will worsen our local challenges."

## **Trump Budget Wants \$50.7M For Tinian Divert.**

[Marianas Variety](#) (2/14) reports that President Trump's budget proposal includes "a request for \$50.7 million for the Tinian divert airfield project." Trump's proposal "also funds the important clean water and safe drinking water programs that have brought some \$60 million to the Marianas over the last decade." However, Trump "proposes less for these programs than in last year's budget." Congressman Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan said, "We will be taking a closer look at what the president has said he wants. And we will be pushing back to keep those programs that the Marianas uses and needs, when the appropriation committees begin taking input from Members, as is done each year."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (2/14).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Commentary: Coal Jobs Won't Come Back – But There Are Other Ways To Help Coal Country.**

In a commentary for [Reuters](#) (2/13), former Obama administration policy advisor Jason Walsh, wrote that it was "always obvious that Donald Trump would never be able to keep his promise – made both as candidate and president – that he would bring coal jobs back to battered mining communities." Even though the coal industry has long sought to "assign blame for the industry's decline on President Obama's environmental policies, the primary drivers of that decline have been economic, the most important being the low cost of natural gas." Trump's promise gave "false hope to laid-off coal miners, and the communities where they live and work, at a juncture when many of them had finally accepted the reality that their jobs weren't coming back – and were embarking on the hard but necessary course of diversifying their local economies."

### **Editorial: BLM Move? The Idea Has Some Appeal.**

In an editorial, the [Albany \(OR\) Democrat-Herald](#) (2/13) argues that moving the Bureau of Land Management's headquarters from Washington, D.C. could make the BLM more receptive to the concerns of constituents in the West. The paper notes that "more than 99 percent of the land under its control falls in one of a dozen Western states: Oregon, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Washington and Wyoming." But it also says that "even if the BLM moved its decision-making out West, it still would need to maintain a strong presence in D.C., where vital policy and budget matters are hashed out: The agency needs to maintain strong relationships both in the West and in D.C."

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Commentary: Trump's Infrastructure Plan Harms The Environment.* [Fortune](#) (2/13, Cassidy).
- *California's Hostility To Offshore Drilling Is Rooted In Past Spills.* [High Country \(CO\) News](#). (2/13, Lester)
- *Tuesday's Editorial: Protect Florida's Valuable Housing, Coastline And Orange Industry.* [Florida Times-Union](#) (2/13).
- *Op-ed: Plan By Trump To Throw Away Years Of Desert Planning.* [Sierra \(CA\) Wave Online](#) (2/13, Prather).
- *11 Billion Reasons To Raise Park Entry Fees.* [Newsday \(NY\)](#) (2/13, Harmer, Smith).



- *New Park Ferry A Good Idea For Bike-weary Sausalito.* [Marin \(CA\) Independent Journal](#) (2/13, Spotswood).
- *Navajo Generating Plant Closure Will Deal Blow To Tribe.* [Payson \(AZ\) Roundup](#) (2/13, Curley).
- *Judith Enck: Make America Dirty Again.* [WAMC-AM](#) Albany, NY (2/13, Enck).

## Top National News

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### Media Analyses: Wray Appears To Contradict White House On Porter Background Check.

FBI Director Wray's testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee on the Bureau's handling of then-White House Staff Secretary Rob Porter's background check, which appears to contradict the timeline offered by the White House, was covered by all three broadcast networks in combined coverage running nearly 10 minutes. Those reports, as well as print and online coverage, highlight continued criticism of the Trump Administration's response.

David Muir opened [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/13, lead story, 4:45) by reporting on "the domestic abuse firestorm consuming the West Wing," with the FBI "contradicting the timeline given by the White House, saying they informed the White House four times about Rob Porter's past." ABC's Cecilia Vega: "President Trump's own FBI director today publicly contradicting the White House's shifting story about when they were first informed of the domestic violence allegations" against Porter. "Over and over again, Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and her deputy, Raj Shah, have said the FBI was still conducting Porter's security background check when his two former wives went public with their claims of abuse." But "the FBI says that's not true. In a stunning moment on Capitol Hill," Wray told senators that "his agents actually gave the White House reports on Porter four times, as far back as last spring." Wray: "The FBI submitted a partial report on the investigation in question in March and then a completed background investigation in late July."

On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/13, story 3, 2:35), David Glor reported, "The FBI and the White House are giving conflicting accounts of the status of the investigation." CBS' Chip Reid: "In an interview with the Wall Street Journal, Chief of Staff John Kelly was asked if the White House should have handle immediate Porter's situation any differently. Kelly said, 'No, it was all done right.' Despite that, the White House remains on the defensive, a week after the story broke. Mr. President, do you have a message to domestic violence victims? ... Trump did not answer that question, despite calls today from two Republican senators to speak out for victims of abuse." Sen. Susan Collins: "I would like to hear a stronger denunciation from the White House of domestic violence." Sen. Joni Ernst: "I think he needs to send a stronger message, a stronger message. We need to allow women and men that have been abused to come out, make sure their sisters heard and believed."

Lester Holt said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/13, story 4, 2:30) that it was "an extraordinary moment" as Wray "threw a wrench in what the White House says happened." [USA Today](#) (2/13, Johnson) reports that Wray "said a 'partial report' on Porter was submitted to the White House as early as March, and the FBI submitted a completed review in 'late July.' The White House requested follow-up information from the FBI on Porter's review as recently as November, he said, before the bureau 'closed the file' in January." [Reuters](#) (2/13) reports that Wray told senators, "I'm quite confident that in this particular instance, the FBI followed established protocols."

The [New York Times](#) (2/13, Davis, Shear) reports that Wray's testimony "pointed up a contradictory and frequently changing story line from the White House about a scandal that has engulfed the West Wing" and that "has raised questions about the credibility of President Trump's most senior advisers" as well as "the degree of tolerance they may have shown to an ambitious colleague apparently eager to cover up a dark past." The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, Nakashima, Harris) also says that Wray's comments "stand in stark contrast to how the White House has in recent days portrayed the status of the background check and when senior officials knew about the allegations of abuse against Porter."

Sen. Roy Blunt said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/13) that "the process is broken," adding, "Whoever is supposed to be doing these clearances, they're either asking the wrong questions, don't know how to get the answers. People are waiting for months just to get their background clearance. ... The other question though is, should people who don't have clearance have access to document that require clearance? And obviously the answer is no."

Sen. Chris Murphy said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/13), "I think the President has to be much stronger on taking care of people who have been accused of this kind of abuse inside his

White House, but he also has to answer why he's got people handling sensitive information that the FBI has not said are qualified to do that."

The [Daily Caller](#) (2/13, Datoc) reports that Sanders said that Wray's testimony was "not at odds with statements previously made by the White House." She said, "My understanding is any information would have gone to the personnel security office. That office had not completed their process in order to make a recommendation for adjudication to the White House. That was still ongoing and, therefore, recommendation had not been made."

***Kelly's Role Continues To Generate Scrutiny.*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13, Bender, Ballhaus, Nicholas) reports that the White House has spent much of the week trying to shift attention away from its handling of the Porter case. But Kelly's role continues to face scrutiny. Sen. Claire McCaskill said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/13) that Kelly "is somebody who's used to being in a leadership position and getting to the bottom of things. Once you find out that your most trusted aide, that you're giving security sensitive information to, cannot clear a security clearance, it seems to me that the first thing you do is, 'Why?' And then you want to get all the information. And then you want to see the FBI file and then you want to get them in for an interrogation about it. Why did none of that happen?"

Philip Rucker of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), "White House aides are turning on Kelly. One official told us the chief is 'a big, fat liar,' and second said the Wray testimony contradicting Kelly's version of events was a 'killer.'" Post conservative blogger Jennifer Rubin [tweeted](#), "If not outright lying, Kelly's handling of this smacks of sheer incompetence."

[The Hill](#) (2/13, Delk) reports that ex-White House Communications Director Anthony Scaramucci said [via Twitter](#) that Kelly should resign, and Joanne Lipman, author of "That's What She Said: What Men Need To Know (And Women Need To Tell Them) About Working Together," writes in [USA Today](#) (2/13) that "the ingrained, extensive culture of sexual harassment in the military" may have impaired Kelly's ability to handle Porter.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) says in an editorial that while Kelly's defense of the handling of the issue was problematic, his dismissal would not bring anything but more West Wing chaos. However, Vanity Fair's Gabriel Sherman [tweeted](#), "Widespread chatter tonight among Republicans close to the White House that Trump is nearing decision to name Gary Cohn as Kelly's replacement."

[Politico](#) (2/13, Gerstein, Matishak) headlines its report "FBI Director Puts Responsibility For Porter On White House," while a story in [The Hill](#) (2/13, Beavers) is headlined "FBI Chief Contradicts White House Account On Porter Background Check." [Bloomberg News](#) (2/13, Strohm, Sink) and the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/13, Tanfani) also have straightforward reports.

***Eric Trump: Domestic Abusers Are "Lowest Of The Low."*** The [New York Post](#) (2/13, Tacopino) reports that Eric Trump said during an interview on WABC Radio New York, "There's nothing worse in the world than domestic abuse. It's truly the lowest of low and you have to take it very seriously and [the President] does take it very seriously."

***Schumer Says Trump Should Personally Denounce Domestic Abuse.*** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/13, Weaver) reports that Senate Minority Leader Schumer said at a news conference, "I haven't heard the President say something directly about how bad domestic abuse is. To have a spokesperson get out and say something is not good enough."

***Waters Says She Thinks Trump Knew About Porter's Abuse.*** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/13, Lim) reports that Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) "accused President Trump of knowing about...Porter's alleged history of domestic violence, despite not having any evidence to support her claim." Waters told MSNBC, "He does not have a record of having supported women any time, any place, anywhere. And no, he's not said anything about the victims because he really does not care. ... I think the President knew."

***Sanders Says Hicks Was Not Involved In Most Discussions Of Porter's Exit.*** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/13, Westwood) reports that Sanders said Tuesday that White House Communications Director Hope Hicks "did not participate in many of the discussions" surrounding Porter's departure. Sanders told reporters, "She was not part of a lot of the conversations that took place." The Examiner notes that Hicks and Porter "had a romantic relationship."

***Sullivan Says Discussion Of "Respect For Women" Brings Out "Worst" In Sanders.*** In her [Washington Post](#) (2/13) column, Margaret Sullivan writes that there was "a new rock-bottom from the podium at the Trump White House press briefing" on Monday as Sanders "dripped disdain" and "oozed contempt" while answering questions about Porter's ex-wives. Sullivan writes, "You might think that as one of the most visible women in the Trump administration, Sanders would bring some credibility – maybe even sympathy – to bear on subjects related to respect for women. In fact, it seems to bring out the worst in her."



***White House Banned New Interim Security Clearances Last November.*** [Politico](#) (2/13, Restuccia, Stephenson) reports that according to a November 7 internal email, "the White House quietly imposed a ban on new interim security clearances for anyone in the executive office of the president last fall, but it let existing employees with interim clearances stay on." The email "does not shed light on the reason for the mandate," and the White House "did not comment on the email or the policy changes it described."

### **Seoul: US Willing To Hold Direct Talks With North Korea.**

In what the [New York Times](#) (2/13, Choe) calls a "shift in the Trump Administration's policy," US officials told South Korean President Moon Jae-in that they were willing to hold direct negotiations with North Korea, a spokesman for the South Korean leader said Tuesday. Spokesman Kim Eui-kyeon told reporters, "The United States too looks positively at South-North Korean dialogue and has expressed its willingness to start dialogue with the North." The statement came just days after Vice President Pence visited South Korea where he met with Moon. Since the Vice President's departure Saturday, "reports of an understanding between Washington and Seoul on the possibility of dialogue have appeared in the news media, but South Korean officials would not confirm them until Tuesday." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/13, story 7, 1:50, Muir), meanwhile, briefly reported that South Korea still has not responded to an invitation for talks from the North, delivered during a "high-profile visit of Kim Jong Un's younger sister."

A [New York Times](#) (2/13) editorial questions whether "the new opening between the two Koreas, begun amid the feel-good spirit of the Winter Games, [can] be nudged and nurtured into serious dialogue over North Korea's nuclear program? While still a long shot, there's a somewhat better chance of engagement" since Kim's "surprise decision to dispatch his sister" to the Olympics and since Vice President Pence told the Washington Post that the Administration was willing to hold preliminary talks with North Korea. The Times cautions that "a special burden rests with North Korea. ... If Mr. Kim is serious about resolving the crisis, he could send an early signal by releasing the three Americans still held in North Korean prisons or announcing a pause in his nuclear and missiles testing."

***Coats Warns North Korea "Decision Time" Is Near.*** [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/13, story 3, 0:15, Mitchell) reported briefly that US intelligence officials are "telling Congress that Kim Jong-Un is planning more missile tests this year and another nuclear test, despite his sister's smiles at the Olympics." [Reuters](#) (2/13, Chiacu) reports DNI Coats warned Tuesday that time was running out for the US to act on the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Coats told a Senate panel that North Korea presents "a potentially existential" threat to the US and is likely to conduct more weapons tests this year. Said Coats, "Decision time is becoming ever closer in terms of how we respond to this. Our goal is a peaceful settlement. We are using maximum pressure on North Korea in various ways." [Politico](#) (2/13, Alexander) also briefly reports Coats' comments.

***US Officials: US Shouldn't Fall For North Korea's Olympic "Charm Offensive."*** The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (2/13, Johnson) reports the nation's top intelligence officials warned Tuesday that Americans "should not be deceived by North Korea's charm offensive at the 2018 Winter Olympics as Kim Jong Un remains intent on acquiring nuclear weapons capable of striking the United States." DIA Director Robert Ashley cautioned that Kim's "strategic calculus has not changed and we should not be misled by the events that are taking place around the Olympics." CIA Director Pompeo similarly said, "There is no indication there's any strategic change in the outlook for Kim Jong Un and his desire to retain his nuclear capacity to threaten the United States."

Frank Bruni, in his [New York Times](#) (2/13) column, rejects comparison's of Kim's sister, Kim Yo-jong, to Ivanka Trump. Bruni writes, "I get it. Both young women attempt to put a pretty, pert face on a clan — and a government — of transcendent ugliness. Both decided to do that in the context of triple axels and the luge. Ivanka is due in South Korea for the closing ceremony. But not all ugliness is created equal, Donald Trump is not Kim Jong-un, the United States is nothing like North Korea and to come anywhere near that suggestion is nuts."

Claudia Rosett, a foreign-policy fellow with the Independent Women's Forum, writes in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) that missing from recent media reports about Kim Yo-jong are details about her work in North Korea as deputy director of the nation's Propaganda and Agitation Department and US allegations of ties to "notorious abuses of human rights."

***Trump Jr. Criticizes Olympian Adam Rippon For Remarks About Pence.*** The [New York Post](#) (2/13, Tacopino) reports Donald Trump Jr. "slammed" US Olympic medalist Adam Rippon for the athlete's criticism of Vice President Pence's position on gay rights. Responding to a USA Today

report that “claimed Rippon — an openly gay figure skater — did not want his Olympic experience to be ‘about Mike Pence,’” Trump Jr. [tweeted](#), “Really? Then Perhaps you shouldn’t have spent the past few weeks talking about him. I haven’t heard him mention you once???”

### **Trump Donates Fourth-Quarter Salary To DOT As Infrastructure Push Continues.**

[USA Today](#) (2/13, Estepa) reports that on the day after the White House “roll[ed] out a major infrastructure plan,” it announced that President Trump will donate his fourth-quarter salary of \$100,000 to the Transportation Department to aid in “rebuilding what Press Secretary Sarah Sanders called ‘our crumbling infrastructure.’” The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, Fahrenthold) reports that Trump, “who has claimed a wealth of \$10 billion, promised before taking office he would donate his \$400,000 annual salary.” He has previously announced quarterly donations to the National Park Service, the Education Department, and HHS.

The [Washington Times](#) (2/13, Boyer) reports that in accepting the check, Transportation Secretary Chao lauded Trump’s infrastructure plan, saying, “The President’s proposal will create new jobs, strengthen our economy, and improve the quality of life for everyone.” [Politico](#) (2/13, Lima) and the [Daily Caller](#) (2/13, Caruso) have brief reports, while Rebecca Ballhaus of the Wall Street Journal [tweets](#) a photo of Chao accepting the check.

***Trump Urges Democrats To Join In Bipartisan Infrastructure Effort.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/13) reports in a brief item that in an early morning tweet on Tuesday, the President “appeared to suggest that if his recently unveiled infrastructure plan were unsuccessful, it would be the Democrats’ fault.” Trump [tweeted](#), “Our infrastructure plan has been put forward and has received great reviews by everyone except, of course, the Democrats. After many years we have taken care of our Military, now we have to fix our roads, bridges, tunnels, airports and more. Bipartisan, make deal Dems?” [Reuters](#) (2/13, Shepardson) reports that he later “urged congressional Democrats...to make a deal” in person, telling a group of lawmakers, “I actually think that we can go bipartisan on infrastructure. We put in our bid. Come back with a proposal.”

***Fort Worth’s Trump-Skeptic GOP Mayor Part Of White House Push.*** [McClatchy](#) (2/13, Drusch) reports that Fort Worth, Texas Mayor Betsy Price, a Republican “who avoided Donald Trump during the 2016 campaign, is now an important ally as the president tries to make inroads with a coalition dominated by Democrats – big city mayors.” Price told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram that her relationship with Trump “hasn’t changed since the 2016 election.” However, “as the mayor of one of the largest conservative-run cities in the country, Price said her office is enjoying unusual access to a White House that’s in the market for conservative allies” to work on infrastructure.

***Private-Equity Funds Express Disinterest In Infrastructure Plan.*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13, Gottfried, Podkul) reports that even though private-equity funds have already raised billions for infrastructure investments, most are not interested in the White House infrastructure plan. Though they pressed the Administration to create incentives for states and municipalities to accept more private money for infrastructure, the Journal reports that most doubt the President’s plan will significantly increase public-private partnerships.

***WPost: Next Generation 911 Funding Should Be Included In Infrastructure Package.*** In an editorial noting that this week marks “the 50th anniversary of the first 911 emergency call placed” in the US, the [Washington Post](#) (2/13) says that part of any infrastructure package should be funding for Next Generation 911, which could cost more than \$20 billion. The Post says 911 “is a victim of its own success” and is now a vital, but overburdened, resource.

### **IAE: US On Track To Become World’s Largest Oil Producer.**

The [Financial Times](#) (2/13, A1, Raval) reports on its front page that the International Energy Agency said the US is poised to become the world’s largest oil producer in 2019.

***IEA Warns That US Shale Production Could Hurt Oil Market Recovery.*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13, Alessi) reports that the International Energy Agency opined in its monthly report that US shale production is growing so fast that it may reverse the fragile recovery of the oil market by overwhelming global demand. Following the report’s release, oil prices fell, with US prices down 1.35% to \$58.51 and Brent down 0.69% to \$62.17. The IEA opined that the current situation is similar to the first period of US shale growth, which led to a global glut that tanked prices four years ago.

### **Experts Believe EPA Will Continue Easing Of Enforcement Under Trump Administration.**

[The Hill](#) (2/13, Green) reports experts believe that “the reported decline in enforcement actions” at the EPA “is a likely harbinger of what’s to come from the Trump administration.” On Thursday,

the agency “reported that it had recommended that 115 cases of illegal pollution be prosecuted in the last fiscal year, down from 152 the year before and a peak of nearly 400 cases in 2009.” The Hill adds that “the findings seemed to confirm speculation that the EPA under President Trump has shifted its focus away from regulating pollution and prosecuting polluters, and experts and former EPA officials predict the enforcement numbers would continue to drop.”

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

*“Is North Korea Causing Trouble Or Giving Peace A Chance?”* A [New York Times](#) (2/13) editorial questions whether “the new opening between the two Koreas, begun amid the feel-good spirit of the Winter Games, [can] be nudged and nurtured into serious dialogue over North Korea’s nuclear program? While still a long shot, there’s a somewhat better chance of engagement” since Kim’s “surprise decision to dispatch his sister” to the Olympics and since Vice President Pence told the Washington Post that the Administration was willing to hold preliminary talks with North Korea. The Times cautions that “a special burden rests with North Korea. ... If Mr. Kim is serious about resolving the crisis, he could send an early signal by releasing the three Americans still held in North Korean prisons or announcing a pause in his nuclear and missiles testing.”

*“An End To Gaza’s Misery Is As Elusive As Peace.”* In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/13) laments the “misery” in Gaza, which has been “ruined” Israel’s “devastating blockade” and military attacks. The Times also criticizes the Trump Administration’s “vindictive decision to cut funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.” The Times acknowledges that “there is no defending Hamas” but adds that “holding two million people hostage is not the way to fight Hamas, and the suffering only nurtures more rage and militancy.” The Times calls for “Hamas, the Palestinian Authority, Israel, the United States and international donors” to “quickly find ways to meet immediate needs,” but warns “the only real solution is a peace deal with Israel, which seems more unlikely every day.”

### Washington Post.

*“The Stakes In The DACA Debate Could Not Be Higher.”* A [Washington Post](#) (2/13) editorial says “a blade of uncertainty hangs over the necks of all those young immigrants, brought to this country as children and raised and educated as Americans.” The Post says it is “rare that so many lives may hinge so immediately, and so consequentially, on the outcome of any congressional debate” but “those are the stakes in the Senate’s deliberations [on immigration] this week. It would be good if, along with the political calculations, lawmakers kept sight of them.”

*“Release The Democratic Memo, Republicans, And Prove You’re Really Transparent.”* A [Washington Post](#) (2/13) editorial says the “motives of Mr. Trump and his enablers, such as memo author Rep. Devin Nunes, are clear enough: to seed doubt about federal law enforcement among enough Americans that Mr. Trump will be able to brush off any negative conclusions that emerge from the Russia probe.” As the fate of the Democratic rebuttal “is sorted out,” it will “test whether that motive is shared — or at least tacitly encouraged — by House Speaker Paul D. Ryan and the rest of the House GOP caucus.”

*“Here’s An Idea For Infrastructure Week: Bring 911 Into The 21st Century.”* In an editorial noting that this week marks “the 50th anniversary of the first 911 emergency call placed” in the US, the [Washington Post](#) (2/13) says that part of any infrastructure package should be funding for Next Generation 911, which could cost more than \$20 billion. The Post says 911 “is a victim of its own success” and is now a vital, but overburdened, resource.

### Wall Street Journal.

*“Trump And The Dreamers.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) argues that there are political incentives for both sides to find an agreement on immigration and lawmakers who kill it will pay a political price.

*“Russian Meddling This Election.”* A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) editorial urges the intelligence community to warn the public about the threat from Russia, and calls on the President to tell Russian President Vladimir Putin to put an end to its interference.

*“Kelly And The Chaos.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) says in an editorial that while White House chief of staff Kelly’s defense of the handling of the allegations surrounding Rob Porter was problematic, his dismissal would not bring anything but more West Wing chaos.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

#### *Wall Street Journal:*

[Stock Market 'Fear Index' Faces Probe](#)  
[Amazon Hospital-Supply Push Marks Its Latest Move Into Healthcare](#)  
[Police Recommend Charging Netanyahu With Bribery, Fraud](#)  
[A Billion-Dollar Bribery Scandal Sweeps Through The Oil Industry](#)

#### *New York Times:*

[Russia Already Plotting To Sway 2018 Elections, Spy Chiefs Say](#)  
[White House Let Porter Keep Job After F.B.I. Report](#)  
[Netanyahu Should Face Graft Charges, Israeli Police Say](#)  
[Germans Quietly Pass An Equinox Of Unity, But The Walls Remain](#)  
[Adam Rippon On Quiet Starvation In Men's Figure Skating](#)  
[Meth, the Forgotten Killer, Is Back, And It Is Everywhere](#)

#### *Washington Post:*

[In Iraq, Prestige Is A Phone Number Away](#)  
[FBI Chief Rebuts Porter Timeline](#)  
[2 Visions For Healthcare Collide In Pittsburgh](#)  
[Israeli Police Recommend Charges For Netanyahu](#)  
[When You Get To DCA Early, But Your Flight Is At BWI](#)  
[Russia Is Targeting 2018 Midterms, Top Spies Warn](#)

#### *Financial Times:*

[US On Track To Become World's Largest Oil Producer](#)  
[ANC Orders Jacob Zuma To Resign As South African President](#)  
[German Conservatives Start To Plan For Life After Merkel](#)  
[Property Star's Promotion Signals Likely Blackstone Succession](#)

#### *Washington Times:*

[Democrats Look For New Grand Bargain On Immigration](#)  
[Steve Bannon's Promised Political Army Fails To Materialize](#)  
[How New Russian Submarine Tactics Are Threatening To Overwhelm Aging U.S. Fleet](#)  
[Liberal Group With Ties To Obama, Hillary Calls To Restrict Overseas U.S. Military Voting](#)  
[Russia Planning A Replay For 2018 Vote, Intel Chiefs Warn](#)  
[For A Better Valentine's Day, Put Down The Smartphone, Social Scientists Say](#)

#### *Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:*

**ABC:** White House Staffer; Russia Meddling; Oregon Mountain Rescue; Florida-Child Murder; Pruitt-High Cost Travel; Immigration Policy-Legal Challenge; Winter Olympics; Israel Netanyahu Corruption Scandal; BMW-Uncontrollable Car; United Emergency Landing; Restaurant-Racial Bullying; Bill Paxton Death Lawsuit; Dog Show.

**CBS:** Oregon Mountain Rescue; Chicago Officer Shot; White House Staffer; Russia Meddling; Pruitt-High Cost Travel; NYC Bomber Trial; Delta Emergency Landing; Unregistered Guns; MLB News; Olympic Female Snowboarder.

**NBC:** Oregon Mountain Rescue; Russia Meddling; North Korea Missiles; White House Staffer; Obama House-Terror Scare; Olympic Female Snowboarder; Flu Epidemic; Olympic Male Snowboarder; NYC Bomber Video; Birth Statistics; Marvel Movies.

#### *Network TV At A Glance:*

White House Staffer – 9 minutes, 50 seconds  
Russia Meddling – 7 minutes, 10 seconds  
Oregon Mountain Rescue – 5 minutes, 50 seconds

#### *Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:*

**ABC:** Olympic News; Oregon Mountain Rescue; Russia Meddling; White House Staffer.

**CBS:** Russia Meddling; Immigration Deal; Trump-Porn Start Scandal; Oregon Mountain Rescue; Olympic News; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** White House Staffer; Immigration Deal; Oregon Mountain Rescue.

**NPR:** Immigration Policy-Legal Challenge; Oregon Mountain Rescue; Nikki Haley-Myanmar; Wall Street News.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

#### White House:

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Meets with bipartisan Members of Congress on infrastructure; participates in a working session regarding the Opportunity Zones provided by tax reform; signs H.R. 4708, the DHS Blue Campaign Authorization Act and S. 534, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Assault and Safe Sport Authorization Act.

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — No public schedule announced.

**US Senate:** 8:45 AM GOP Sen. Richard Burr at 'Budgeting for Biodefense: Are We Prepared?' event – 'Budgeting for Biodefense: Are We Prepared?' Bipartisan Policy Center event, featuring Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Richard Burr, former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, and Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) Director Dr Rick Bright, Bavarian Nordic President and CEO Paul Chaplin, and BPC Senior Vice President G. William Hoagland Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC 203-202, Washington, DC [www.bipartisanpolicy.org](http://www.bipartisanpolicy.org) [https://twitter.com/BPC\\_Bipartisan](https://twitter.com/BPC_Bipartisan) #BPCLive

10:00 AM Senate Commerce Committee considers FTC nominees – Nominations hearing considers Joseph Simons to be Federal Trade Commission Commissioner and Chairman-designate, and Rohit Chopra, Noah Joshua Phillips, and Christine Wilson to be FTC Commissioners. (Room and Time change) Location: 216 Hart, Washington, DC <http://commerce.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/SenateCommerce>

10:00 AM Senate Judiciary Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Joel Carson III to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the 10th Circuit; Colm Connolly and Maryellen Noreika to be U.S. District Judges for the District of Delaware; William Jung to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida; and Ryan Holte to be U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 226, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including consideration of nominations of Jeff Pon to be Office of Personnel Management Director, and Michael Rigas to be OPM Deputy Director, as well as 'S. 2221, Repeal Insurance Plans of the Multi-State Program Act of 2017', 'S. 2296, Guidance Out Of Darkness Act', 'S. 2400, GAO Financial Audit Mandates Revision Act of 2018', 'S. 2113, Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017', 'S. 2349, Improve Data on Sexual Violence Act', 'S. 2413, Bridge Contract Transparency and Accountability Act of 2018', 'S. 2178, Inspector General Recommendation Transparency Act of 2017', 'H.R. 2229, All Circuit Review Act', and 22 U.S. Postal Service facility naming bills Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 342, Washington, DC <http://hsgac.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SenateHSGAC>

10:30 AM Hearing on 'The President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget', with testimony from Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 215, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

2:30 PM IRS Acting Commissioner Kautter testifies to Senate Finance Committee on FY'19 budget – Hearing on 'The President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget', with testimony from Internal Revenue Service Acting Commissioner and Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Tax Policy David Kautter Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 215, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

2:30 PM Nominations hearing considers John Ring to be a National Labor Relations Board member Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

2:30 PM Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on current readiness of U.S. forces – Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee hearing on 'Current Readiness of U.S. Forces', with testimony from U.S. Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville; Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. William Moran; U.S. Marine Corps Assistant Commandant Gen. Glenn Walters; and U.S. Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Stephen Wilson Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 222, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

2:30 PM Oversight hearing on 'Making Indian Country Count: Native Americans and the 2020 Census' Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 628, Washington, DC <http://indian.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/IndianCommittee>

2:30 PM Senate Indian Affairs Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, to consider 'S. 995, the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation Equitable Compensation Act' and 'S. 1953, the Tribal Law and Order Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2017' Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 628, Washington, DC <http://indian.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/IndianCommittee>

2:30 PM GOP Sen. James Lankford speaks at COA on U.S. policy in the Western Hemisphere – Council of the Americas hosts conversation with Republican Sen. James Lankford on U.S. policy in the Western Hemisphere, including Central America and ongoing NAFTA negotiations Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC 203-202, Washington, DC [www.as-coa.org](http://www.as-coa.org) <https://twitter.com/ASCOA>

2:30 PM Senate Finance Committee Executive Session – Executive Session, to consider the nominations of Dennis Shea to be Deputy U.S. Trade Representative (Geneva Office), with the rank of ambassador; and C. J. Mahoney to be Deputy U.S. Trade Representative for Investment, Services, Labor, Environment, Africa, China, and the Western Hemisphere, with the rank of ambassador Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 215, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

3:00 PM Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on military family readiness – Personnel Subcommittee hearing on 'Military and Civilian Personnel Programs and Military Family Readiness', with testimony from Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Robert Wilkie Jr.; U.S. Army Deputy Chief of Staff (G-1) Lt. Gen. Thomas Seamands; Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (N-1) Vice Adm. Robert Burke; U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services Lt. Gen. Gina Grosso; U.S. Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Lt. Gen. Michael Rocco; Blue Star Families CEO Kathy Roth-Douquet; National Military Family Association Government Relations Director Kelly Hruska; and Syracuse University Institute for Veterans and Military Families Executive Director Dr J. Michael Haynie Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 232A, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

3:00 PM Senate Natural Resources subcommittee legislative hearing – National Parks Subcommittee legislative hearing, with testimony from National Park Service Deputy Director P. Daniel Smith Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 366, Washington, DC [www.energy.senate.gov](http://www.energy.senate.gov)

3:30 PM Senate Small Business Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers David Tryon to be Small Business Administration Chief Counsel for Advocacy; and Hannibal Ware to be SBA Inspector General Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 428A, Washington, DC <http://sbc.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 10:00 AM OMB Director Mulvaney testifies to House Budget Committee – Hearing on 'The President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget', with testimony from Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1334, Washington, DC <http://budget.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/housebudgetGOP>

10:00 AM HHS Secretary Azar testifies to House Ways and Means Committee on FY'19 budget – Hearing on 'The Department of Health and Human Services' Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request', with testimony from Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar Location: Rm 1100, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/WaysandMeansGOP>

10:00 AM House Armed Services Committee hearing on security challenges in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region – Hearing on 'The Military and Security Challenges and Posture in the Indo-Pacific Region', with testimony from U.S. Pacific Command Commander Adm. Harry Harris Jr. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

10:00 AM House Technology subcommittees joint hearing on blockchain technology – Oversight Subcommittee and Research and Technology Subcommittee joint hearing on 'Beyond Bitcoin: Emerging Applications for Blockchain Technology', with testimony from Congressional Research Service Government and Finance Division analyst in cybersecurity policy Chris Jaikaran; National Institute of Standards and Technology Information Technology Laboratory director Dr Charles Romine; IBM Cloud vice president of blockchain technologies Jerry Cuomo; Walmart vice president of food safety Frank Yiannas; and Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law Blockchain Project co-director Aaron Wright Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2318, Washington, DC <http://science.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HouseScience>



10:00 AM House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on the current data security and breach notification regulatory regime – Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining the Current Data Security and Breach Notification Regulatory Regime', with testimony from BSA – The Software Alliance Vice President for Global Policy Aaron Cooper; Summit Credit Union CEO and President Kim Sponem (on behalf of Credit Union National Association); Morrison & Foerster partner Nathan Taylor; Georgetown University Law Center Adjunct Professor Marc Rotenberg; and R Street Institute Senior Fellow Paul Rosenzweig Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

10:00 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on NHTSA oversight – Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee hearing on 'Oversight of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration', with testimony from NHTSA Deputy Administrator Heidi King Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM House Education subcommittee hearing on govt management of Native American schools – Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining the Government's Management of Native American Schools', with testimony from Bureau of Indian Education Director Tony Dearman Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2175, Washington, DC <http://edworkforce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/EdWorkforce>

10:00 AM House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on modernizing food aid – Hearing on 'Modernizing Food Aid: Improving Effectiveness and Saving Lives', with testimony from former USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios; University of Texas at Austin Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs Assistant Professor Dr Erin Lentz; and former Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2172, Washington, DC <http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACrepublicans>

10:00 AM House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee marks up its views and estimates letter – Markup hearing on 'Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Views and Estimates of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure', 'H.R. 4921, the STB Information Security Improvement Act', and 'H.R. 4925, the FRA Safety Data Improvement Act' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2167, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:15 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on the impact of health care consolidation – Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining the Impact of Health Care Consolidation', with testimony from Harvard Business School Professor of Business Administration Dr Leemore Dafny, and Visiting Scholar Dr Kevin Schulman; and Carnegie Mellon University Heinz College Professor of Economics and Health Policy Dr Martin Gaynor Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2322, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:15 AM House Natural Resources Committee markup hearing – Markup hearing on 'H.R. 835, To update the map of, and modify the maximum acreage available for inclusion in, the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument', 'H.R. 4134, Cecil D. Andrus-White Clouds Wilderness Redesignation Act', and 'H.R. 4895, Medgar Evers National Monument Act' Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

10:45 AM House Small Business Committee marks up its views and estimates letter – Markup hearing on 'Views and Estimates of the Committee on Small Business on Matters to be set forth in the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2019' Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

11:00 AM House Small Business Committee hearing on job creation, competition, and the economy – Hearing on 'Job Creation, Competition, and Small Business' Role in the United States Economy', with testimony from Goldman Sachs Global Information Research Division Head Steven Strongin; Robert Louis Group President and CEO JR Foster; and Johnson Security Bureau President Jessica Johnson-Cope Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2360, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

12:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including 'H.R. 3978 – TRID Improvement Act of 2017' and 'H.R. 3299 – Protecting Consumers' Access to Credit Act of 2017' Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

2:00 PM Water, Power and Oceans Subcommittee oversight hearing on 'The State of the Nation's Water and Power Infrastructure' Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324,

Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

2:00 PM Information Technology Subcommittee hearing on 'Game Changers: Artificial Intelligence Part I' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2154, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

2:00 PM House Energy subcommittee hearing on new source review permitting challenges for manufacturing and infrastructure – Environment Subcommittee hearing on 'New Source Review Permitting Challenges for Manufacturing and Infrastructure', with testimony from George Washington University Law School Research Professor Emily Hammond; Bracewell partner Jeffrey Holmstead; American Forest and Paper Association and American Wood Council Vice President for Public Policy Paul Noe; ADEQ Office of Air Quality Associate Director Stuart Spencer; Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry Director of Government Affairs Kevin Sunday; and Natural Resources Defense Council Clean Air Director John Walke Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2322, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

2:00 PM House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on legislative proposals on derivatives – Capital Markets, Securities, and Investment Subcommittee hearing on 'Legislative Proposals Regarding Derivatives', with testimony from Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) President and CEO Kenneth Bentsen Jr.; National Association of Corporate Treasurers Chairman Thomas Deas (on behalf of Coalition for Derivatives End-Users); Center for American Progress Managing Director of Economic Policy Andy Green; and International Swaps and Derivatives Association CEO Scott O'Malia Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

2:00 PM House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on the administration's Middle East peace plan – Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee hearing on 'Israel, the Palestinians, and the Administration's Peace Plan', with testimony from Foundation for Defense of Democracies founder and President Clifford May; The Washington Institute for Near East Policy Irwin Levy Family Program on the U.S.-Israel Strategic Relationship Senior Fellow Ghaith al-Omari; and former U.S. Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2172, Washington, DC <http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACrepublicans>

2:00 PM House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on the OAS – Western Hemisphere Subcommittee hearing on 'Advancing U.S. Interests Through the Organization of American States', with testimony from Government Accountability Office Director of International Affairs and Trade Thomas Melito; International Human Rights Group President and CEO Alfonso Aguilar; and former OAS Secretary for Administration and Finance Peter Quilter Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2200, Washington, DC <http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACrepublicans>

3:30 PM House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on USAF readiness – Readiness Subcommittee hearing on 'Air Force Readiness Posture', with testimony from U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations Lt. Gen. Mark Nowland; Air National Guard Director Lt. Gen. Scott Rice; and Air Force Reserve Chief's Deputy Maj. Gen. Derek Rydholm Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2212, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCREpublicans>

3:30 PM House Energy and Commerce Committee markup hearing – Markup hearing on 'H.R. 3477, Ceiling Fan Energy Conservation Harmonization Act', 'H.R. 4986, FCC Reauthorization Act of 2018', and 'H.R. 1876, Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act of 2017' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2123, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

5:30 PM House commemoration ceremony in honor of the bicentenary of the birth of Frederick Douglass – House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Cedric Richmond host commemoration ceremony in honor of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederick Douglass Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Emancipation Hall, Washington, DC <http://majorityleader.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPLeader>

**Other:** 8:30 AM The Hill hosts 'America's Opioid Epidemic' policy discussion – The Hill hosts 'America's Opioid Epidemic: Supporting Recovery' policy discussion, on recovery support services, barriers that exist and how Congress might play a role in expanding access to long-term recovery programs. Speakers include Democratic Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, Republican Rep. Dave Joyce, Surgeon General of the U.S. Jerome Adams, American Psychological Association CEO and Executive Vice President Arthur Evans, National Council for Behavioral Health Practice Improvement Vice President Tom Hill, RASE Project Founder and CEO Denise Holden, Detroit Recovery Project President and CEO Andre Johnson, and The Hill Editor-in-Chief Bob Cusack and Health Care Reporter Rachel Rouben Location: Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave NW,



Washington, DC thehill.com <https://twitter.com/TheHill>

8:30 AM National Congress of American Indians Executive Council Winter Session continues – National Congress of American Indians 2018 Executive Council Winter Session (aka Tribal Nations Legislative Summit) continues, with speakers today including Secretary of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin, Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez, Democrats Sens. Heidi Heitkamp and Jeff Merkley and Reps. Derek Kilmer, Betty McCollum, Tom O'Halleran and Frank Pallone, and Republican Sen. John Hoeven Location: Capital Hilton, Washington, DC <http://www.ncai.org/> <https://twitter.com/NCAI1944>

11:00 AM Dem Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton marks Black History Month with celebration of Frederick Douglass – Democratic Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton hosts celebration of the life of Frederick Douglass to commemorate Black History Month, leading a discussion with Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives Co-founder and President Ken Morris Jr., the great-great-great grandson of Frederick Douglass; African American Civil War Memorial Museum Director Frank Smith; and 'Frederick Douglass in Washington, D.C.: The Lion of the Anacostia' author John Muller Location: Ron Brown High School, 4800 Meade St NE,, Washington, DC [www.norton.house.gov](http://www.norton.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/EleanorNorton>

11:00 AM House Democratic leaders Democratic Reps. Joe Crowley and Linda Sánchez hold weekly press conference Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, First St NE, Washington, DC <http://www.dems.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseDemocrats>

12:00 PM United States Diplomacy Center host African American History Month panel discussion – United States Diplomacy Center host African American History Month panel discussion highlighting the diplomatic careers of two prominent 19th century African Americans who served as U.S. ministers to Haiti – Ebenezer Bassett and Frederick Douglass Location: U.S. Diplomacy Center, 330 21st St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.state.gov/> <https://twitter.com/StateDept>

1:00 PM Institute for Corean-American Studies symposium – ICAS Winter Symposium, presented by the Institute for Corean-American Studies Liberty Foundation, with the theme 'Humanity, Liberty, Peace and Security – the Korean Peninsula Issues and United States National Security'. Speakers include former North Korean senior economic official Jong Ho Ri, author Tara O, and ICAS fellow Sergei Kurbanov Location: Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, Washington, DC [www.icasinc.org](http://www.icasinc.org)

1:00 PM Wilson Center discussion on U.S. national security and the Korean peninsula – 'U.S. National Security and the Korean Peninsula: Perspectives from a Defector, a Russian, and an Analyst' Wilson Center Asia Program discussion, hosted jointly with the Institute for Corean-American Studies, with speakers including former Korea Daehung Trading Corporation (North Korea) Head Jong Ho Ri, St Petersburg State University Professor Sergei Kurbanov, Center for Strategic and International Studies Pacific Forum Center Adjunct Fellow Tara O, ICAS President and Chairman Synja Kim, and Wilson Center Asia Program Director Abraham Denmark Location: Wilson Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/> <https://twitter.com/TheWilsonCenter>

1:00 PM Dem gubernatorial candidates speak at NPC on 2018 elections and the future of Dem leadership – People For the American Way Action Fund host '2018 Governor Races The Future of Democratic Leadership and Control' NPC newsmaker, with Democratic gubernatorial candidates Stacey Abrams (Georgia), Andrew Gillum (Florida) and David Garcia (Arizona) discussing the party's 'opportunity to increase power in the states' in the Nov 2018 elections, and how taking back governorships in 2018 'will change the political landscape with the next generation of Democratic leaders' \* In all three states, Republicans currently have control of the governor's mansion and both chambers of the state legislature Location: National Press Club, 529 14th St NW, Washington, DC [www.pfaw.org](http://www.pfaw.org) <https://twitter.com/peoplefor>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

Late-night talk shows did not contain political jokes or were re-runs.

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## DOI In The News

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### Interior Department Reorganization Could Change How National Parks, Public Lands Are Managed.

[USA Today](#) (2/15, Collins) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who is moving forward with a plan to restructure his department, argues the reorganization, "which is expected to begin this year, is needed to cut red tape and better manage the natural resources and cultural heritage sites the department is charged with protecting and to preserve them for future generations." The proposal will be put forth "in the next couple of weeks to the nation's governors." Additional information will be "made public during congressional hearings on the department's proposed \$11.7 billion budget, Zinke told reporters earlier this week."

*Tester To Zinke: Meet With Tribes Before Complicating Interior Department.* [Char-Koosta News](#) (2/15) reports that Sen. Jon Tester is pressing Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "to meet with tribal governments" before remaking the Interior Department. Tester wrote, "Making any changes within the Department will undoubtedly impact tribes and requires rigorous and meaningful consultation. It is the Department's duty to uphold this special trust responsibility and to meet the obligations that arise from these unique government to government relationships." The article says that "in addition to tribal consultation, Tester is also pushing Zinke to publish the proposal online, solicit public comments, and guarantee that Montana is not split into two management districts by the agency."

### Documents Shed Light On Staff Moves That Prompted Probes.

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/15, Doyle, Lunney, Streater) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "high-profile transfers of his department's most senior staffers upended careers and embittered some workers but also excited others with fresh opportunities, newly released Interior documents show." Interior posted "approximately 2,000 pages of email traffic and other documents related to Interior's reassignment last year of SES employees" online in response to a Freedom of Information Act request. The documents "show Interior has continued to reassign senior executives even as the IG's office investigates the first round made in June."

### Southeastern Wildlife Expo Kicks Off With Inaugural \$100K Conservation Award Presentation.

The [Charleston \(SC\) Post and Courier](#) (2/15, Quick) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke attended the kickoff of the 36th Southeastern Wildlife Exposition on Wednesday. The event included the presentation of the Award for Conservation Excellence.

## Bureau Of Indian Affairs

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### Trump Budget Cuts To Tribal Programs 'Untenable': NCAI Prez.

[Law360](#) (2/15, Westney) reports that the National Congress of Indians on Wednesday opposed President Trump's 2019 budget proposal, "with the group's president saying in a statement that the 'untenable cuts' to tribal programs included in the budget undermined the government's treaty and trust duties to tribes." NCAI President Jefferson Keel, "speaking for the group's executive committee, said in the statement that the proposed budget would slash the Bureau of Indian Affairs' budget by about 15 percent, including 'unconscionable reductions' to environmental protection, housing, education, law enforcement and court programs."

### Wife Charged With Killing Oglala Sioux Police Officer.

The [AP](#) (2/15) reports that "the wife of an Oglala Sioux police officer is charged with killing him last weekend." Tiffany Janis is "charged with second-degree murder in the shooting death of 52-year-old Officer Brian Garrett of Kyle." The FBI "says Garrett was killed early Saturday on the Pine Ridge Reservation during an apparent domestic dispute. He was off-duty at the time."

## Bureau Of Indian Education

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### Claims Of Better Tribal School Oversight Draw Skepticism From Lawmakers.

[Cronkite News](#) (2/14, Schultz) reports that "a Bureau of Indian Education official told lawmakers Wednesday that his agency is making 'strong improvements' in the oversight of tribal schools, despite a long history of problems and proposed cuts to the bureau's budget." However, BIE Director Tony Dearman's testimony to a House Education and the Workforce subcommittee was "criticized as 'pretty naïve' by Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Tucson, who said the system's \$1.3 billion backlog of repairs, poorly allocated resources and other problems will not be helped by cuts to school and social programs." Other members of the committee "also had sharp questions about the BIE, which was put on the Government Accountability Office's 'high risk' list of poorly managed agencies last year." Dearman "said his agency, which oversees 47,000 students in 183 schools, has been working on a restructuring plan that includes increasing consultation with tribal councils, improving teacher retention rate and hiring personnel to improve data collection."

## Bureau Of Land Management

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### Who Benefits From BLM Rule Change?

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/15) reports that the Bureau of Land Management estimates that the net gain of revisions it made to methane regulations "could approach \$1 billion over a decade." The BLM analysis said "those benefits are mostly derived from reduced industry compliance costs, which would outweigh losses sustained from escaped natural gas and unaddressed atmospheric emissions." The estimates of a total net benefit of between \$578 million and \$942 million from 2019 to 2028 are drastically reduced compared to the original, Obama-era rule.

### Massive Juniper Removal Project Could Help Idaho Sage Grouse.

The [AP](#) (2/15, Ridler) reports that "federal officials have released final plans for one of the largest-ever projects to remove juniper trees to protect habitat for imperiled sage grouse that will also benefit cattle ranchers in southwestern Idaho." The Bureau of Land Management "made public earlier this week the 247-page final Environmental Impact Statement for the Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-Grouse Habitat Project." The BLM "plans to remove juniper trees from about 1,100 square miles (2,800 square kilometers) within a 2,600-square-mile (4,200-square kilometer) area in Owyhee County over about 15 years." BLM spokesman Michael Williamson said, "We feel that with a landscape-scale project like this, it gives us a better chance for success."

## Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

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### Bureau Defends Trump's Oil And Gas Drilling Plan.

The [AP](#) (2/14) reports New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy delivered a recorded message to an

environmental rally in New Jersey on Wednesday in advance of a scheduled hearing hosted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Addressing President Donald Trump, Murphy said, "You will not drill off our precious shores! No way!" Opponents to the proposed drilling plan "held their own meeting in Hamilton, New Jersey" due to concerns that there would be no microphone present at the official BOEM hearing. The [Press of Atlantic City \(NJ\)](#) (2/14, Brunetti) reports the BOEM meeting will be held in "an open-house format, with BOEM staff at stations around the room, where they will answer questions, according to the agency."

*In New Jersey, Opponents Of Offshore Drilling Gear Up For A Fight.* [NPR](#) (2/15, Phillips) reports that a group of New Jersey "fishermen, environmentalists, realtors and local business owners" attended a public meeting hosted by the Bureau of Ocean Management to voice their "unified opposition" to the federal offshore drilling plan. Jim Benton, executive director of the New Jersey Petroleum Council, said offshore oil rigs could bring thousands of jobs and millions of tax dollars to the state. Moreover, he said drilling rigs and fishing already co-exist while spills like the Deep Water Horizon are rare.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Asbury Park \(NJ\) Press](#) (2/16, Zimmer).

### **New Yorkers Rally Against Offshore Drilling Plan.**

The [AP](#) (2/15, Klepper) reports that "New York state's leading environmental advocates protested President Donald Trump's plan to open offshore areas to oil and gas drilling on Thursday as federal energy officials held an open house on the proposal near the state Capitol." The group "said Trump's plan could devastate the environment while leaving potential renewable energy sources untouched." William Brown, chief environmental officer at the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, "said he welcomed comments from opponents to the plan." He said, "We're having great discussions, They can come in and talk for four hours. We want it."

*Long Islanders Voice Opposition To Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan.* [Newsday \(NY\)](#) (2/14, Harrington) reports offshore drilling opponents spoke at a state hearing in Hauppauge, New York on Wednesday, using "their strongest language to date to condemn the Trump administration's plan to open nearly the entire U.S. coastline... to oil and gas exploration and drilling." Assemb. Fred Thiele said, "It's the single worst idea to come out of Washington in the last year." The meeting was convened by Assemb. Steven Englebright "a day in advance of a U.S. Interior Department's scheduled public meeting on the topic in Albany."

### **Washington State Likely To Deny Permits For Trump Oil Drilling Plan: Official.**

[Reuters](#) (2/15, Kearney) reports that the state of Washington is "preparing to reject land leases and easements to stymie the Trump administration's plan to allow oil drilling off its shores, an official of the Pacific northwest state said on Thursday." State Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz, in a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke issued Thursday, "said the permitting of pipelines or other oil and gas infrastructure on state-managed land must prove to be in the 'best interest of the state.'" Franz wrote, "Given the danger offshore drilling poses to our environment and economy, I do not foresee how any proposal to use our aquatic lands to service offshore wells is in the best interest of Washington."

### **Maine Legislators Tell Trump: No Drilling Off Our State.**

The [AP](#) (2/15) reports that "the Maine House of Representatives has passed a resolution calling on President Donald Trump to leave Maine out of offshore oil and gas drilling." Legislators unanimously passed the resolution Thursday, citing the threat to commercial fishing jobs.

### **Oil And Water: Trump Scientists Find California Hostile To Renewed Possibility Of Offshore Drilling.**

In a feature article, the [Sacramento \(CA\) News & Review](#) (2/15, Johnson) reports BOEM marine archaeologist Brian Jordan "must have drawn the short straw" after Jordan "found himself surrounded by angry ocean-defenders" during the BOEM's recent public hearing in California on the proposed offshore drilling plan. Jordan and his colleagues, who were tasked with representing the BOEM at the hearing, attempted to describe the BOEM's "bureaucratic process and help folks navigate the room," where attendees were able to submit comments on the proposed plan.

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **Shell Platform Transformed Into Artificial Reef In The Gulf Of Mexico.**



The [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (2/15, Sneath) reports a 3,000-ton, 350-foot-tall structure in the Gulf of Mexico that once supported Shell's Cougar platform was "recently converted in an artificial reef off the coast of Louisiana, where it will serve as a habitat for fish and other marine life." The frame was donated as part of Louisiana's Artificial Reef Program, which "provides marine habitat and benefits oil and gas companies by reducing the cost of barging the equipment to shore." Shell External Relations advisor Theodore Rolfvondenbaumen said, "Because of the important role offshore oil and gas structures play in supporting marine ecosystems and recreational fishing, we continue to look for opportunities to participate in artificial reefing programs." Rolfvondenbaumen pointed out that Shell has performed conversions of at least three of its platform frames into artificial reefs. Shell also "donated \$619,000, which will go toward maintaining and monitoring the Cougar reef."

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Trump's Budget Would End Grant Funding For State Endangered Species Projects.**

The [Huffington Post](#) (2/15, D'Angelo) reports that the Trump Administration is looking to end "grant funding for state efforts to recover endangered species – even as it has stressed cooperating with states on conservation efforts." In the 2019 budget proposal released on Monday, President Trump and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "recommend allocating not a single dollar to the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, a program authorized by the Endangered Species Act that divvies out money to states and territories for voluntary species and habitat conservation projects on non-federal land." The move is surprising, the article says, given the administration's emphasis "that forming strong partnerships with states and other parties is key to preventing species from going extinct."

### **Feds Accused Of Withholding Docs On Pesticide Use On Protected Lands.**

[Courthouse News](#) (2/15, Kutner) reports that the Center for Biological Diversity "claims in court that officials at the Environmental Protection Agency and Fish and Wildlife Service are stonewalling its efforts to obtain records related to an unreleased biological opinion on pesticide use on federally protected habitats." In a federal complaint filed in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, the group "claims it requested records in June 2017 related to the use of pesticides containing chlorpyrifos, diazinon, or malathion on species and their habitats protected under the Endangered Species Act." But the group says "neither defendant agency has provided it with responsive records, a violation of the Freedom of Information Act."

### **Refuge Weighs Cycling, Geocaching Pursuits.**

The [Rio Grande Valley \(TX\) Morning Star](#) (2/15) reports that Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge is reviewing eight uses, including bicycling and virtual geocaching, "as being appropriate to start or to continue at the facility located near Alamo." The refuge and its manager, Bryan Winton, are seeking public comments "on what are called Compatibility Determinations to gauge public interest in these activities as well as suitability."

### **Ex-Calhoun Conservation District Director Indicted For Embezzlement.**

The [Battle Creek \(MI\) Enquirer](#) (2/15, Christenson) reports that "the former executive director of the Calhoun Conservation District has been indicted in federal court on embezzlement charges." According to the article, "a grand jury in the U.S. District Court in the Southern Division of the Western District of Michigan indicted Tracy Bronson of Marshall on Wednesday on five counts of theft involving federal funds, according to a release issued Thursday by U.S. Attorney Andrew Birge." Federal prosecutors "said the agency received money from the United States Department of Interior, United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Environmental Protection Agency and Bronson issued a series of unauthorized checks to herself."

Additional coverage was provided by [WOOD-TV](#) Grand Rapids, MI (2/15).

### **Montana Won't Allow Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Hunts In 2018.**

The [AP](#) (2/15, Brown) reports that "Montana won't hold a grizzly bear hunt in 2018 after state officials said Thursday they want to avoid complicating lawsuits over the animal's legal status." Montana wildlife commissioners "said letting hunters kill some of those bears could give momentum to pending legal challenges that seek to restore protections." The vote against a hunt this year was unanimous, "but Commission Chairman Dan Vermillion said Thursday's action



doesn't preclude a Montana grizzly hunt in the future."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/15, Chaney).

### **Invasive Species Of Shrimp Found In Lake Superior.**

The [Wisconsin State Journal](#) (2/15, Wroge) reports that "an invasive shrimp has been found in Lake Superior for the first time." A single specimen of the bloody-red shrimp was fathered "from a sweep net sample taken near the Allouez Bay in Superior, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources said Thursday." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "identified the bloody-red shrimp, scientifically called *Hemimysis anomala*, in January."

## **National Park Service**

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### **National Park Service Funds Could Be Tapped To Pay For President's Military Parade.**

[National Parks Traveler](#) (2/15) reports that the National Park Service could help pay for a military parade proposed by President's Trump. The article cites the New York Times, which reported that "a former staff member on the House and Senate budget committees said funding for the parade could be found without a formal budget request by using existing money already in the Department of Defense budget or possibly from the Department of Homeland Security or the National Park Service."

### **Yellowstone Fee Proposal Wins Initial Vote In Wyoming House.**

The [AP](#) (2/15) reports that the Wyoming House of Representatives has "agreed to vet a proposal that advocates for imposing a fee at Yellowstone National Park to help pay for wildlife conservation efforts in the states surrounding the park." The proposed resolution was approved in an introductory vote on Thursday. The resolution asks that the Interior Department and the National Park Service enter into an agreement with Wyoming, Montana and Idaho on a fee at Yellowstone.

### **'Great Backyard Bird Count' To Be Held At Gateway Arch.**

The [St. Louis Patch](#) (2/15, Danielson) reports that the National Park Service is "inviting visitors to explore the Gateway Arch's renovated 'backyard' and connect with nature at The Great Backyard Bird Count at the Gateway Arch grounds Saturday, Feb. 17." [KTVI-TV St. Louis](#) (2/15) reports that the event will "feature special programs focusing on birds and their life cycle, the importance of citizen science and bird watching, and one of our greatest natural resources: the Mississippi River."

### **Yosemite's Famous Mariposa Grove Will Reopen In June.**

The [San Jose \(CA\) Mercury News](#) (2/15, Rogers) reports that Mariposa Grove at Yosemite National Park will "reopen to the public on June 15 after a nearly three-year, \$40 million effort to restore the area's natural tranquility and environmental health." Jamie Richards, a spokeswoman for the park, said, "This is a landmark project to restore an area of cultural and historic significance to Yosemite. We are working to create a more natural and enjoyable visitor experience. We hope when you walk through, it will be a peaceful and natural experience."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Fresno \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/15, Calix), the [Sonora \(CA\) Union Democrat](#) (2/15, McCarthy), and the [Sierra Star \(CA\)](#) (2/15).

### **'Jurassic Park'-style Fence Proposed In Delaware Water Gap Has N.J. Town Roaring 'No!'**

The [Lehigh Valley \(PA\) Express Times](#) (2/15, Novak) reports that "one New Jersey township fears a 'Jurassic Park'-style fence proposed by the state transportation department will ruin one of the state's most scenic views" in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. According to the article, "the approximately half-mile-long, \$50-million-plus fence is being designed to guard against potential rockfalls in Knowlton and Hardwick townships in northern Warren County." The Knowlton Township government "recently announced its opposition to the NJDOT project and listed its grievances, including the cost, location and impacts." The NPS "issued a statement Wednesday saying that it is working with the DOT and has expressed concerns about the project's impact on the scenery, wildlife and plants, but did not say it was opposed to the fence outright."

### **Park Takes On Massive Tamarisk Removal Project Invasive Species Removed Near**

## **Delicate Arch.**

The [Moab \(UT\) Times-Independent](#) (2/15, Egelhoff) reports that Arches National Park is "taking on an unprecedented 54-acre tamarisk removal project." According to National Park Service Chief of Maintenance John Lewis, "the road to Delicate Arch and the Delicate Arch viewpoint was flooded for more than 30 days last year due to an overgrowth of the invasive tamarisk." The National Park Service is "using excavators to remove entire trees, including their root balls," and "after tree removal, NPS will dig channels to simulate the drainages that were there before the tamarisk came in."

## **18-wheeler Crashes Into Johnson City Visitors Center; Damage To Be Assessed.**

The [River Cities \(TX\) Daily Tribune](#) (2/15, Swinney) reports that "an 18-wheeler jack-knifed and slammed into the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center with such force Feb. 15 that it might have shifted the building's foundation by 4-5 inches." No one was inside the building and no injuries were reported. The structure, "a former mercantile store built in the early 1900s, is owned by the U.S. National Park Service, which leases it to the chamber of commerce."

## **HSNP Superintendent Announces Retirement.**

The [Hot Springs \(AR\) Sentinel-Record](#) (2/15, Wells) reports that "after a 25-year career with the National Park Service, 14 of those in Hot Springs, Josie Fernandez, superintendent of Hot Springs National Park, announced on Wednesday that she will retire at the end of March." She said, "This is the longest that I have lived anywhere, period, in my entire life. The longest job I've held and the longest that I've lived anywhere, so it's been an honor and a privilege, absolutely."

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Population Drop Results In Federal Aid Cuts For Territories.**

[Marianas Variety](#) (2/16, Cagurangan) reports that "all of the U.S territories, except for Guam, have seen a population decline, supporting the 'anecdotal observation that many islanders are leaving their homes to seek better opportunities elsewhere,' according to the Department of the Interior." In its 2019 budget proposal, the department "said the CNMI led the territories in population decline, with a 22.2 percent decrease from 2000 to 2010." The population decline was attributed to "the closure of the garment industry, which employed workers mostly from China, the Philippines and Thailand." The article notes that "the latest census, however, showed a relatively small decrease in the CNMI population at 0.68 percent, from 53,833 in 2010 to 53, 467 in 2017."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Sabino Creek Is Flowing Again After Having No Flow For 153 Days.**

The [Arizona Daily Star](#) (2/14, Kreutz) reports that "rainfall over the past two days has worked wonders for drought-stricken Sabino Creek — producing a measurable creek flow on Thursday morning for the first time in 153 consecutive days." Emmet McGuire, field office chief with the Arizona Water Science Center of the U.S. Geological Survey, said, "Our gauge began reporting flow at 10 a.m. Thursday. At 11:15 a.m., the reported flow was 347 cubic feet per second" at the gauge site near Sabino Dam. McGuire said, "This flow event ends the 153 day no-flow period of time and there should be flow in the creek for some time in the immediate future."

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Florida Republican House Members Call For Offshore Drilling Ban.**

In an op-ed for the [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (2/14), 10 Republican members of Florida's delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives say that in an effort to codify the pledge of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to exempt Florida's coast from offshore drilling, they have introduced the PROTECT Florida Act, which will extend a current moratorium "on drilling and exploration in the Eastern Gulf and establish a new moratorium on drilling and exploration in the Florida Straits and South Atlantic...through the next two five-year drilling plans." According to the authors, "legislative action, like passage of the PROTECT Florida Act, is needed now more than ever."

Floridians must unite to protect our clean and healthy Florida beaches, ocean ecosystems and coastal communities.”

### **Offshore Drilling Jeopardizes Coastal Health.**

In an op-ed for the [Tallahassee \(FL\) Democrat](#) (2/14, Rackleff), former speechwriter for U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz and U.S. Congressional candidate Bob Rackleff writes that he “attended the Interior Department’s public meeting on its new offshore oil and gas leasing program and came away more opposed than ever – and not just because of new leases off Florida’s coast.” Rackleff believes “proposed rulemaking that would repeal common sense safety regulations” for offshore drillers threatens to expose Florida’s Gulf Coast to another drilling-related environmental disaster, akin to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Rackleff describes the Interior Department’s recent proposals and changes as “reckless” and says they “are not in the national interest and that, after all, is this Department’s duty to serve.”

### **Offshore Energy Is Critical To Future Energy Security.**

In an op-ed for the [Palm Beach \(FL\) Post](#) (2/14, Milito), American Petroleum Institute group director of Upstream & Industry Operations Erik Milito says “energy policy must be focused on tomorrow,” and with the expansion of U.S. offshore oil drilling, Americans won’t have to imagine “how much more natural gas and oil we could develop if additional coastal resources were available.” Milito says it is estimated that “90 billion barrels of oil and 327 trillion cubic feet of natural gas” are currently “awaiting discovery on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf.” Moreover, offshore oil production in areas currently closed to drilling “could generate hundreds of thousands of jobs and lead to production gains of more than a million barrels of oil equivalent per day – further reducing supply from overseas sources.”

### **Boosting Offshore Drilling Is About Meeting Tomorrow’s Demand, Not Just Today’s.**

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (2/14, Wald), energy consultant Ellen Wald believes that when it comes to the proposed offshore drilling plan, “[n]o state should seek to limit its own opportunities.” Given “no one can predict America’s energy needs or a state’s future economic needs,” the U.S. “must be able to fully explore for offshore oil and gas.” Wald believes that “[i]f Florida or California or any other state is excluded from the new offshore plan, oil and gas companies and investors will develop resources elsewhere. ... This is a punishment for excluded states, not an advantage.” As a result, Wald calls for the Trump administration to pursue the “responsible strategy” of opening “opportunities for energy exploration off of Florida’s coast” in order to prepare for the day when “we will need the energy, jobs and revenue an offshore energy industry provides.”

### **Editorial: BLM Bigwigs Should Move West.**

In an editorial, the [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (2/15) supports moving the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management to the West. Currently, the paper says, the BLM’s “decisions impact the livelihoods of people who populate rural communities but those decisions are made far from the forests, grasslands and high deserts they call home.” The editorial argues that moving the headquarters “would give the agency bigwigs a different perspective and a better-than-nodding acquaintance with the territory they manage and the people who live there.”

In his column for the [Mesquite \(NV\) Local News](#) (2/15, Mitchell), Thomas Mitchell also supports the proposal.

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Editorial: What’s In A Name? Opportunity And Economic Development.* [Willcox \(AZ\) Range News](#) (2/15).
- *Tester Should Stop Playing Politics With Public Lands.* [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (2/15, Bader, Garrity).
- *We Need To Restore Warm Water Habitats For Manatees.* [Fort Myers \(FL\) News-Press](#) (2/15, Holbrook).
- *Gilbreth Column: Could ‘Carolina Panther’ Still Be On The Prowl?.* [Charleston \(SC\) Post and Courier](#) (2/15, Gilbreth) .
- *Trump’s Budget Will Destroy National Parks.* [Outside](#) (2/15, Siler).
- *Trump, Zinke Seek To Foul Santa Barbara’s Nest.* [Santa Barbara \(CA\) Independent](#) (2/15, Welsh).

- *Let This Sink In.* [Sacramento \(CA\) News & Review](#) (2/15, Johnson).

## Top National News

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### Trump Addresses Florida School Shooting Without Mentioning Guns.

Coverage of President Trump's statement on the Wednesday mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida focuses on the fact that the President did not mention guns, and several reports also state that the President reversed a regulation that would make it harder for those with mental illness to buy guns. Analyses also look at the President's seeming discomfort with his role as consoler, contrasting this with President Obama's emotional responses to national tragedies.

David Muir said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/15, story 4, 2:00), "For the fourth time since his inauguration, President Trump addressing the nation about a mass shooting." The President sent "his condolences to the families and promising to focus on mental health, but he did not answer questions about guns." ABC's Cecilia Vega: "President Trump today speaking directly to those grieving families in Parkland, Florida." Trump: "You are suffering is our burden, also." Vega: "Calling the shooter mentally disturbed, his message was clear." Trump: "We are committed to working with state and local leaders to help secure our schools and tackle the difficult issue of mental health." Vega: "But shortly after taking office, President Trump blocked an Obama-era rule that made it tougher for the mentally ill to obtain guns. Today, no mention of gun control."

On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/15, story 4, 1:45), Jeff Glor said, "The Broward County Sheriff called today for tougher laws to keep guns out of the hands of people with mental health issues, including forcing them to be examined by mental health professionals. President Trump did not mention gun laws when he addressed the nation today about the shooting." CBS' Chip Reid: "The President didn't have a lot to say today about what he actually plans to do about school shootings. One thing he did say he wants to do is 'work with state and local leaders to help secure our schools and tackle the difficult issue of mental health.' But just last year, the President signed legislation reversing an Obama-era regulation that would have made it more difficult for some people with mental illness to buy guns. ... The President did not even mention gun control today, and the truth is, as long as Republicans are in charge of both houses of Congress, there is little chance of doing anything on that front."

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/15, story 4, 2:05, Holt), Peter Alexander said, "The President's efforts to comfort the nation tonight striking for what he didn't say. ... Trump in a nearly seven-minute statement not once mentioning the word 'guns.' Instead, again signals his focus is on the mental health of shooters, not the weapons they use." [WTVX-TV](#) (2/15, 12:11 p.m. EST) reported that Trump "said he wants to make sure that children are safe. He talked about mental health. He never once approached the idea of any type of discussion on gun control legislation." Similarly, [WFOR-TV](#) Miami (2/15, 5:45 p.m. EST) broadcast that Trump "did not mention guns or gun control at all." [WPLG-TV](#) Miami (2/15, 12:23 p.m. EST) reported Trump "spoke for six minutes trying to ease the pain and offering very little in the way of specifics."

The [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (2/15, Leary) reports that Trump "said he plans to visit Parkland soon," but "did not say when he would visit Parkland, and he did not address guns." The [AP](#) (2/15, Lucey) reports, "Declaring the nation united and grieving with 'one heavy heart,'" Trump "promised Thursday to tackle school safety and 'the difficult issue of mental health' in response to the deadly shooting in Florida. He made no mention of the scourge of gun violence." And though he "stressed the importance of mental health and school safety improvements, his latest budget request would slash Medicaid, the major source of federal funding for treating mental health problems, and cut school safety programs by more than a third." [Politico](#) (2/15, Hefling) reports that "funds targeted for reduction or elimination in the Trump administration's fiscal 2019 request have helped pay for counselors in schools and violence prevention programs."

[USA Today](#) (2/15, King) also reports that Trump "offered no specific remedies or policy proposals, such as increased gun control. Instead, most of his comments were aimed at comforting victims and their families." The [New York Times](#) (2/15, Rogers) reports that Trump said, "We must also work together to create a culture in our country that embraces the dignity of life that creates deep and meaningful human connections, and that turns classmates and colleagues into friends and neighbors." The Times also says that Trump "made no mention of guns."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/15, Nakamura) reports that in a tweet, Trump "called the suspect

in the mass school shooting 'mentally disturbed.'" At 7:12 a.m., Trump [tweeted](#), "So many signs that the Florida shooter was mentally disturbed, even expelled from school for bad and erratic behavior. Neighbors and classmates knew he was a big problem. Must always report such instances to authorities, again and again!" The Post also writes that "Trump made no mention of gun control laws" either on Twitter or in his remarks.

At 12:33 p.m., Trump [tweeted](#), "In times of tragedy, the bonds that sustain us are those of family, faith, community, and country. These bonds are stronger than the forces of hatred and evil – and these bonds grow even stronger in the hours of our greatest need." Trump later [tweeted](#) a [link](#) to a "Presidential Proclamation Honoring the Victims of the Tragedy in Parkland, Florida."

The [AP](#) (2/15, Lucey) writes that Trump is "not always a natural in the role of national comforter," and the [Washington Post](#) (2/15, Jaffe, Johnson) writes that Trump's "challenges when it comes to connecting with a grieving public are often both personal and political." While President Obama "simply ran out of things to say about the nation's unending string of gun tragedies, Trump – who often strains to express empathy – has struggled to find much to say about them at all." The Post says Trump's Thursday remarks "were so generic that they could have applied to any catastrophe." [Politico](#) (2/15, Dove) says "the overall effect was dutiful, and unmemorable – with nothing like the searing moment" of Obama "wiping his eyes at the White House briefing room lectern as he talked about the murder of schoolchildren" at Sandy Hook. Trump "talked about grief, but showed no sign of it himself."

Jonathan Allen writes on the [NBC News](#) (2/15) website, "The day after a shooter killed 17 people at a Florida high school," Trump "offered comforting words – for gun owners." Larry Pratt of Gun Owners of America said, "That's very encouraging that he's not mounting up with the anti-Second Amendment posse." Chris Waltz of AR-15 Gun Owners of America said, "The fact that the President didn't talk about rifles today...that was good."

Gov. Rick Scott said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/15), "My prayers are with – you know, I can't imagine family member losing a loved one. I have daughters. I have grandchildren. I can't imagine. And I imagine parents this morning are saying to themselves, you know, should my child go to school today? You know, are they going to be safe?" House Majority Leader Scalise said on [Fox News' Ingraham Angle](#) (2/15), "Any time there is any kind of tragedy, immediately you have a group of legislators that run out and calling for gun control it to take away the rights of law-abiding citizens. ... What I think we need to do is pray for the people that died and the families too and all of these kids." Rep. Brian Babin (R-TX) [tweeted](#), "The shooting in #ParklandFlorida is beyond tragic. Our prayers go out to the loved ones whose futures were taken so tragically. We must identify steps to prevent such acts of violence and also reexamine our culture which increasingly glorifies violence & devalues human life."

In response to such comments, [USA Today](#) (2/15) editorializes, "Tragically, images of traumatized students, rushing single file out of classrooms with their hands in the air under the protective muzzles of police rifles, have become all too familiar. So, too, have the rote responses of leaders complaining vaguely about 'absolutely pure evil' running amok (Florida Gov. Rick Scott) or focusing on 'mental health' (President Trump), with nary a mention of the weapons of war used to carry out these massacres. ... Now is the time for more than thoughts and prayers. It's time for serious efforts to stop the madness."

Dan Barry writes in the [New York Times](#) (2/15), "Once again a nation sends thoughts and prayers, because it has happened once again. ... 'There are no words,' [Broward County] Sheriff [Scott] Israel said. Other than offers of thoughts and prayers. Or 'prayers and condolences,' as President Trump wrote on Twitter Wednesday afternoon." Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL) [tweeted](#), "These children experienced a horror that no one should live through. They shouldn't have to beg @HouseGOP for life saving action."

[McClatchy](#) (2/15, Kumar), the [Washington Times](#) (2/15, Persons, Boyer), [Politico](#) (2/15, Nelson), and [The Hill](#) (2/15, Fabian) are among the other sources also covering the President's remarks.

**DeVos Backs Congressional Hearings On School Shootings.** [Politico](#) (2/15, Alexander) reports that Education Secretary DeVos "said Thursday that Congress should hold hearings on school shootings." In a radio interview with Hugh Hewitt, DeVos said, "Congress needs to be holding hearings on these issues. And we've seen lots of discussion about this every time we've had another incident. ... We have got to have an honest conversation, and Congress has to lead on this. It's their job." Rep. Ann McLane Kuster (D-NH) [tweeted](#), "I agree with @BetsyDeVosED that we need Congressional hearings on school shootings. An open and honest dialogue on this issue is painfully long overdue."

**Treasury Says Mnuchin Does Not Back Consideration Of New Gun Laws.** [Politico](#) (2/15, White)



reports that Treasury Secretary Mnuchin “appeared to stage a surprising break from the Trump White House on Thursday” when he said at a House Ways and Means Committee hearing, “I think the gun violence – it’s a tragedy what we’ve seen yesterday, and I urge Congress to look at these issues.” However, his office says that Mnuchin “was referring to whether there was money in the federal budget to examine the proliferation of mass shootings in the United States, not whether Congress should consider new gun control laws.”

**Azar Signals Openness To More Federal Gun Violence Research.** [Politico](#) (2/15, Cancryn) reports that HHS Secretary Azar “opened the door to expanding federal gun violence research, waving off concerns about congressional restrictions on studying the issue.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/15, Howell) reports that Azar signaled that he is “open to researching gun violence, despite a legislative add-on that bars the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from promoting gun control.” Azar told the House Energy and Commerce Committee, “My understanding is that the rider does not in any way impede our ability to conduct our research mission. It’s simply about advocacy.”

**Democratic Anger Over Inaction On Guns Grows.** The [New York Times](#) (2/15, Fandos, Kaplan) reports that though “lawmakers from both parties said they would move quickly to ban so-called bump stocks” following the mass shooting in October, and though pro-gun Senate Majority Whip Cornyn pledged “legislation to bolster the nation’s instant background check system for would-be gun buyers” following a November mass shooting in his home state of Texas, “Congress has effectively done neither.” Republicans “called for prayers, but argued that no single fix to the nation’s gun laws would deter a shooting” like that in Florida, as Democrats, “who have put forward a spate of gun safety bills only to see them left unaddressed by Republicans...seethed with frustration.”

Sen. Michael Bennet said on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#) (2/15), “It’s important for us to close the loopholes that exist in the federal background checks. That’s what we’ve done in Colorado. You ask why aren’t things possible in Washington? It’s a mystery.” Sen. Bill Nelson said on [Fox News’ Fox & Friends](#) (2/15), “I have grown up with guns. I have hunted all my life. I hunt with my son still. And an AR-15 is not for hunting. It is for killing. And the question is, should this be a legal weapon in our society?”

Sen. Tim Kaine said on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#) (2/15), “I live in a state scarred by tragedy. I also live in a state the NRA has headquarters in, Virginia. I will say the NRA sort of has a lock of Congress right now. So much that members of Congress are dramatically out of step with the American public. The thing so unusual about this is the NRA supported background record checks for a long time. The NRA has slowly become an organization that marches to the beat of gun manufacturers.” Rep. Jim Himes (D-CT) said on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#) (2/15), “I fear the answer is an ugly one. Congress is not going to lead on this issue. The NRA has become so powerful around here that, again, Congress will not lead.”

Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA) [tweeted](#), “We must have the courage to act. Americans are 25 times more likely to be killed by a gun than residents in any other developed nation. No single policy is going to stop every shooting – but there are clearly ways to prevent gun violence that can save lives.” Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX) [tweeted](#), “Since #SandyHook shooting, at least 439 people have been shot in 273 school shootings. Schools should be a place of safe haven, and not one where our youth fear for their lives.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/15) writes in an editorial, “More than five years have passed since the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, where 20 children and six adults were killed. In that time, dozens of gun control proposals have been introduced in Congress attempting to fix glaring issues with gun safety and regulation. More than 1,600 mass shootings have taken place in America since then.” The Times then offers “a guide to what Congress has – or, more accurately, has not – accomplished during this time” – a chart with various proposed reforms, all left unchecked.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/15) editorializes, “This country has no monopoly on troubled young men. We have no monopoly on hate groups. We aren’t the only place where people miss signs of danger.” What distinguishes the US “from the developed world is our open market in the weaponry of war – in weapons whose chief purpose and selling point is their obscene ability to kill as many people as possible in the shortest burst of time.”

**NRA’s “Record Spending” During 2016 Campaign Examined.** [USA Today](#) (2/15, Schouten) reports on the “record spending in the 2016 election by gun-rights forces,” writing that “the National Rifle Association and other gun-rights organizations spent nearly \$55 million in the 2016 election cycle to oppose or support candidates through independent spending – nearly 19 times the amount spent by groups promoting gun restrictions.” Trump “was one of the biggest

beneficiaries of the NRA's spending in the last election, with the group pumping more than \$31 million into advertising to boost his candidacy." In addition, "more than \$61 million in NRA money has gone to back current members of Congress, most of which benefited Republicans." The [New York Times](#) (2/15) says in an editorial that the NRA "and its congressional servants have been an unyielding obstacle to sensible reform. But the gun lobby's stranglehold on our elected officials does not need to continue, if candidates stand up to the lobby and voters demand that they commit themselves to the sorts of changes that a vast majority of Americans want."

However, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/15) says in an editorial that while there is no evidence that stricter gun laws would prevent such shootings, there is evidence that responding to would-be mass killers with firearms does stop them. Erich Pratt of Gun Owners of America writes in [USA Today](#) (2/15), "Killers continue targeting locations where guns are not allowed. Ninety-eight percent of public mass shootings in this country occur in gun-free zones – the Florida school being one of them."

**FBI Got Tip About Cruz Last Year.** The three broadcast network newscasts were again dominated by the Florida school shooting, with ABC and CBS each spending more than 17 minutes on it, and NBC just under 11 minutes. David Muir reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/15, lead story, 4:15) on the "dark and troubling portrait" that "has now emerged about the horror that played out here a little more than 24 hours ago. ... Children piled into closets, hiding in silence, texting their parents. So many of the students telling me today that they told their parents they thought they were going to die." Jeff Glor said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/15, lead story, 4:45) that Nikolas Cruz appeared in court Thursday, "charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder, one for each of the people killed in the Valentine's Day attack." On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/15, lead story, 3:10, Holt), Catie Beck reported that the fatalities included "a hopeful teen-aged girl, a college-bound swimmer, [and] a beloved football coach," as well as "a school security guard [who] gave his life protecting his students by using himself as a human shield."

Glor reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/15, story 5, 2:10) that the FBI "got a call about the school shooting suspect last year. But the bureau says it did not have enough information to take action." The [Washington Post](#) (2/15, Zapotosky, Barrett, Brown) reports, "A tipster alerted the FBI in September to a disturbing comment that had been left beneath an online video. 'Im going to be a professional school shooter,' read the comment, posted by YouTube user 'nikolas cruz.'" Though two FBI agents interviewed the caller, and "checked public and law enforcement databases for anyone by Cruz's name who might be of concern," the FBI said it "could not identify the person who left the comment."

The [New York Times](#) (2/15, Goldman, Mazzei) reports that the FBI "is reviewing what steps the bureau took before the shooting," though "without more information and limited ability under the circumstances to obtain a subpoena, their options were few. Had agents sought a grand jury subpoena to obtain data from YouTube to identify the person behind the posting, it is not certain that prosecutors would have agreed to seek one based on the scant information available."

[USA Today](#) (2/15, Wolf) reports that though "it was no secret" that Cruz "met the classic profile" – "he had a history of mental illness. He was expelled from school. His adoptive parents were deceased. He loved guns" – law enforcement authorities "said Thursday that existing laws do not allow police to restrain or commit someone just because of suspicious behavior." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/15, story 2, 3:55, Muir) also examined Cruz's "troubling posts on social media," asking, "Were many signs missed?" [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/15, story 3, 5:15, Muir), the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/15, story 2, 4:45, Glor), and [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/15, story 2, 3:10, Holt) all had additional coverage of the shooting and investigation.

**Cruz Appears In Court, Reportedly Confessed To Police.** On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/15, story 3, 2:20, Holt), Kerry Sanders reported, "Cruz today was right where many of his one-time classmates thought he'd end up: in custody after a school shooting." [USA Today](#) (2/15, Stanglin) reports that "a subdued, handcuffed" Cruz made his first court appearance Thursday. "Wearing an orange jail jumpsuit and with his head slightly lowered, Cruz said only, 'yes, ma'am,' when addressed on closed-circuit television by Judge Kim Theresa Mollica," who "ordered the suspect held without bond on 17 counts of murder." The [AP](#) (2/15) reports that a Broward County Sheriff's Office report says that Cruz "confessed to being the shooter," telling officers "that he 'began shooting students that he saw in the hallways and on school grounds' on Wednesday afternoon."

The [New York Times](#) (2/15, Turkewitz, Mazzei, Burch) reports that Cruz "has been placed on suicide watch" at the main Broward County jail, according to Gordon Weekes, the county's chief assistant public defender. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/15, Kamp, De Avila, Campo-Flores) reports

that the Weekes described Cruz as "a very sad young man." Steven Ginsberg of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), "Everybody saw something. Everybody said something. And it still wasn't enough."

**Leader Of White Supremacist Group Says Cruz Was A Member.** The [Daily Beast](#) (2/15) reports that Cruz "was a member of a 'white separatist paramilitary proto-fascist organization,'" according to "a leader of the group," the Republic of Florida. However, Sheriff Israel "said Thursday evening that the claim is 'not confirmed at this time' but 'we are looking into that.'" The Daily Beast also reports, "Two classmates said they saw Cruz wearing a 'Make America Great Again' hat." One said, "He would degrade Islamic people as terrorists and bombers. I've seen him wear a Trump hat."

Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) [tweeted](#), "As the Florida school shooting suspect's ties to a Neo-Nazi group emerge, it's vital that all of us, including President Trump, speak out against hate groups." The [Tallahassee \(FL\) Democrat](#) (2/15, Etters) reports that law enforcement has yet to find a connection between Cruz and the group.

**Everytown For Gun Safety's School Shooting Count Questioned.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/15, Cox, Rich) writes that the "horrifying statistic" spread by Everytown for Gun Safety that there have been 18 school shootings in the US in the first month and a half of 2018 "is wrong. Everytown has long inflated its total by including incidents of gunfire that are not really school shootings," such as a suicide outside a school that "had been closed for seven months" and a late-night shooting at a sorority event on a college campus. The group "defines a school shooting as 'any time a firearm discharges a live round inside a school building or on a school campus or grounds.'"

**Student Survivors Of Shooting Respond To Lahren Tweet.** Fox News commentator Tomi Lahren [tweeted](#) Wednesday evening, "Can the Left let the families grieve for even 24 hours before they push their anti-gun and anti-gunowner agenda? My goodness. This isn't about a gun it's about another lunatic." Carly Novell, a student who survived the shooting, [tweeted](#) in response, "I was hiding in a closet for 2 hours. It was about guns. You weren't there, you don't know how it felt. Guns give these disgusting people the ability to kill other human beings. This IS about guns and this is about all the people who had their life abruptly ended because of guns," while another Parkland student [tweeted](#), "A gun has killed 17 of my fellow classmates. A gun has traumatized my friends. My entire school, traumatized from this tragedy. This could have been prevented."

**Kimmel Tells Trump To Urge Congress "To Do Something Now."** During his monologue on [ABC's Jimmy Kimmel Live](#) (2/15), Kimmel addressed the President, saying, "Tell your buddies in Congress, tell Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell and Marco Rubio – all the family men who care so much about their communities – that what we need are laws, real laws, that do everything possible to keep assault rifles out of the hands of people who are going to shoot our kids. Tell these congressmen and lobbyists who infest that swamp you said you were going to drain...to do something now. Not later, now."

**Seattle-Area Shooting Averted After Planner's Grandmother Alerted Police.** [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/15, story 5, 1:40, Holt) reported that "a potential school attack [was] averted, all because of what a grandmother in the Seattle area decided to do after finding a troubling secret." NBC's Steve Patterson: "Eighteen-year-old Joshua O'Connor was arrested Tuesday morning. His plot to shoot students was foiled after his grandmother found a journal filled with threats and alarming detail. She called 911." On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/15, story 6, 1:35, Glor), John Blackstone reported, "Cathy O'Connor called police to her home in Everett, Washington when she discovered this in her grandson's journal: 'I'm preparing myself for the school shooting. I can't wait. My aim has gotten much more accurate.'"

## **US Denies Plan For "Bloody Nose" Strike On North Korea.**

The [AP](#) (2/15, Pennington) reports the US does not have plans to launch a "bloody nose" strike on North Korea, senators of both parties and an Administration official said Thursday, "rejecting claims the US wants to strike the North's nuclear program in a way that avoids an all-out war." The AP says Thursday's "harmonized message could quell speculation" that President Trump is contemplating limited military action against Pyongyang. A "senior White House" official told lawmakers Wednesday that "no such approach has been adopted," Sens. James Risch and Jeanne Shaheen said at a Senate hearing Thursday. Separately, an Administration official "confirmed their accounts."

[Reuters](#) (2/15, Brunnstrom) reports the statement came during confirmation hearings for Susan Thornton to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian affairs. Thornton, who currently serves as acting assistant secretary, said, "Our preference is to achieve denuclearization



of the Korean Peninsula through a diplomatic settlement, but we will reach this goal one way or another."

**North Korean State TV Not Broadcasting Olympics.** The [New York Times](#) (2/15, Choe) reports North Korea has 22 athletes competing in the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, only 50 miles from its border, but "as of Friday, North Korea's state-run television had broadcast none of the Games." North Korea defector Lee Min-bok said, "For the North Korean regime, there is no big incentive in reminding its people that the South lives well enough to host an Olympics. Unless one of its athletes wins a surprise medal, it's not likely to broadcast any competition to its people."

### **Senate Blocks All Immigration Measures, Fails To Resolve DACA Stalemate.**

Media coverage of yesterday's immigration votes – which did not include a single story on the major network newscasts – highlights the sense of failure in the aftermath of the week-long Senate debate. [TIME](#) (2/15, Jenkins), for example, referred to a "profoundly anticlimactic culmination of what was supposed to have been a freewheeling, honest-to-God debate," and [Politico](#) (2/15, Schor, Everett) to a "frustrating, if largely expected, conclusion to" a "much-hyped...debate...that never really got off the ground." As the [Washington Times](#) (2/15, Dinan, Miller, Sherfinski) indicates, the votes dealt "a major blow to the chances for an agreement" on DACA "before the March 5 deadline President Trump set for Congress," though [USA Today](#) (2/15, Collins, Shesgreen, Today) reports "a few lawmakers floated the idea of passing a temporary extension." USA Today cautions, however, that "it's not clear Congress has the appetite for another bruising immigration debate, particularly as the 2018 election draws near," and that "it's also not clear that Trump would sign such a measure."

Ultimately, said [CNBC](#) (2/15, Pramuk), "many Democrats appear reluctant to yield concessions to Trump and anger their energized liberal base," while "on the other hand," Trump is trying "to appease the voters who put him into the White House as he pledged to crack down on immigration." The [AP](#) (2/15, Fram, Freking) reports "Democrats had held out faint hopes," but Trump "proved unwilling to fold on his demands for a tougher bill, reflecting the hard-line immigration stance that was a cornerstone of his 2016 presidential run." [Vox](#) (2/15, Scott) concludes that with "Republicans controlling every lever of power in Washington, a bill without any funding for Trump's infamous border wall is a nonstarter."

The reporting casts a particularly negative light on the Administration's opposition to the bipartisan Collins-Rounds plan. According to [NPR](#) (2/15, Snell), "Republicans abandoned the bipartisan plan following" a "White House veto threat," and it fell six votes short of advancing to a final vote after a 54-45 tally. On [Twitter](#), the President had called the measure the "Schumer-Rounds-Collins" bill, as well as a "total catastrophe." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/15, Peterson, Hughes) notes Trump further tweeted that voting for the measure "would be a vote AGAINST law enforcement, and a vote FOR open borders," and the [Washington Post](#) (2/15, O'Keefe, Nakamura) that he added, "If Dems are actually serious about DACA, they should support the Grassley bill!" [CNBC](#) (2/15, Pramuk) reported on its website that, "in a rebuke," the bill authored by Sen. Charles Grassley, "favored by...Trump," received "the fewest votes of all four immigration-related amendments before the Senate on Thursday," failing "to advance by a [60 to 39](#) margin."

The [New York Times](#) (2/15, Stolberg) also refers to "a stern rebuke to...Trump," adding "the rejection of the president's plan was bipartisan: Democrats refused its get-tough approach to legal immigration, while many conservative Republicans opposed its pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million young immigrants brought to the country illegally as children." [Breitbart](#) (2/15, Munro), meanwhile, blamed the plan's defeat on "60 Democrats and business-first establishment Republican Senators." DHS, notes [The Hill](#) (2/15, Carney), had "called the framework a 'reasonable compromise,'" and [CNBC](#) (2/15, Pramuk) reported Senate Majority Leader McConnell "contended that Trump went 'clearly more than halfway to meet the Democrats' on immigration." In an editorial titled "Trump Kills Compromise On Immigration," however, the [New York Times](#) (2/15) argues "Trump is not interested in resolving a difficult problem if he can exploit it for political gain," and that "it's hard to imagine that this legislative stalemate concerns the president much."

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/15, Litvan, Kapur) says the Collins-Rounds "bipartisan measure" would have provided "\$25 billion for border security and a path to citizenship for the young immigrants – a plan the White House threatened to veto amid harsh criticism" by Trump, Attorney General Sessions, and DHS. Issuing a veto threat against it, White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders "said in a statement it would encourage 'millions of additional minors to be smuggled into the United States' and is 'dangerous policy that will harm the nation.'" DHS, [USA Today](#) (2/15,

Collins, Shesgreen, Today) reports, "said the bill 'would be the end of immigration enforcement in America.'"

Trump didn't like the bill, says the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/15, Bennett), "because it did not include the curbs on legal immigration he sought." The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/15, Ferrechio) notes, meanwhile, that the Grassley bill Trump backed "provides the same citizenship pathway and border security funding as the Collins-Rounds proposal, but it also limits chain migration to spouses and minor children." The bill "would also end the visa lottery system and reallocate the annual 50,000 spaces to clearing the non-lottery visa backlog."

[Reuters](#) (2/15, Cornwell), meanwhile, notes "a narrow bill focusing just on Dreamers and border security, by Republican John McCain and Democrat Chris Coons, failed on a [52-47](#) vote," while "a fourth measure, focused on punishing 'sanctuary cities' that do not cooperate with federal immigration enforcement efforts, also fell short of 60 votes." [Roll Call](#) (2/15) noted "the Senate rejected that attempt to cut off debate 54-45."

*After "Senior White House Official" Criticized Him, Graham "Punched Back" At Miller.* The [New York Times](#) (2/15, Stolberg) reports that "in a conference call with reporters just before voting began, a senior White House official lashed out" at Sen. Lindsey Graham. The senior White House official, "speaking only on condition of anonymity despite repeated requests to be on the record...accused Mr. Graham of attacking Homeland Security officials and standing in the way of needed immigration changes." The "senior White House official" said Graham "has been an obstacle for those reforms," and that "Democrats should not let 'Lindsey Graham dictate what Democrat senators ought to do.'" Graham "punched back at Stephen Miller, a top White House aide and immigration hard-liner," saying, "As long as the President allows Steve Miller and others to run the show down there, we're never going to get anywhere."

*WSJournal Also Critical Of "President Miller."* In an editorial titled "President Miller's Immigration Veto," the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/15) accuses Trump of giving Miller veto power over immigration proposals, and strongly disputes the Administration's characterization of the Collins-Rounds plan. The Journal further states that its sources indicate Trump is only listening to Miller on the issue, and accuses the adviser of demanding reductions in legal immigration in order to agree to a deal.

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

*"The N.R.A. Can Be Beat."* The [New York Times](#) (2/15) says in an editorial that the NRA "and its congressional servants have been an unyielding obstacle to sensible reform. But the gun lobby's stranglehold on our elected officials does not need to continue, if candidates stand up to the lobby and voters demand that they commit themselves to the sorts of changes that a vast majority of Americans want."

*"What Congress Has Done Since Sandy Hook."* The [New York Times](#) (2/15) writes in an editorial, "More than five years have passed since the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, where 20 children and six adults were killed. In that time, dozens of gun control proposals have been introduced in Congress attempting to fix glaring issues with gun safety and regulation. More than 1,600 mass shootings have taken place in America since then." The Times then offers "a guide to what Congress has – or, more accurately, has not – accomplished during this time" – a chart with various proposed reforms, all left unchecked.

*"Trump Kills Compromise On Immigration."* In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/15) argues that President Trump "is not interested in resolving" the "difficult problem" of immigration reform "if he can exploit it for political gain," and that "it's hard to imagine that this legislative stalemate concerns the president much."

### Washington Post.

*"Ban These Weapons Of War."* The [Washington Post](#) (2/15) editorializes, "This country has no monopoly on troubled young men. We have no monopoly on hate groups. We aren't the only place where people miss signs of danger." What distinguishes the US "from the developed world is our open market in the weaponry of war – in weapons whose chief purpose and selling point is their obscene ability to kill as many people as possible in the shortest burst of time."

*"The Massacre At Inn Din."* The [Washington Post](#) (2/15) editorializes that the massacre at Inn Din, Burma, which was investigated and reported by "intrepid journalists from Reuters," was "only one chapter in a horrific campaign against the Rohingya minority by Burmese security

forces.” The incident also led the two journalists to be detained for “shred[ding]” the Burmese military’s “shoddy coverup” of the incident. The Post asserts that “if Burma has any respect left for democracy, it must release them immediately and drop the charges,” and that “those who committed” the horrific crimes “must be held to account.”

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*“President Miller’s Immigration Veto.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/15) accuses President Trump of giving adviser Stephen Miller veto power over immigration proposals, and strongly disputes the Administration’s characterization of the Collins-Rounds plan. The Journal further states that its sources indicate Trump is only listening to Miller on the issue, and accuses the adviser of demanding reductions in legal immigration in order to agree to a deal.

*“Peter Thiel’s Warning To The Valley.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/15) editorializes that Silicon Valley leaders should pay attention to investor Peter Thiel’s decision to leave Silicon Valley for Los Angeles because of Silicon Valley’s political conformity. The Journal asserts that Americans will probably turn against tech giants like Facebook and Google if they view them as being permanently aligned with the cultural and political left. The Journal opines that Google’s firing of conservative employee James Damore awakened many Americans to the reality of left-wing bias among tech companies.

*“Responding To Parkland.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/15) says in an editorial that while there is no evidence that stricter gun laws would prevent mass shootings, there is evidence that responding to would-be mass killers with firearms does stop them.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### ***Wall Street Journal:***

[Immigration Measures Fail In Senate](#)  
[Missed Warnings In The Florida Shooting](#)  
[Tech Luminary Peter Thiel Parts Ways With Silicon Valley](#)

#### ***New York Times:***

[Suspect Confesses To Shooting Students “In The Hallways”](#)  
[A Mother Weeps For Her Angel: “I Hope She Didn’t Die For Nothing”](#)  
[Leaders Offer Prayers. Children Are Buried. Repeat.](#)  
[Three Immigration Plans Fall, Leaving “Dreamers” In Limbo](#)  
[Meet South Africa’s New President, A Favorite Of Mandela](#)  
[Inaugural Committee Paid \\$26 Million To First Lady’s Adviser](#)

#### ***Washington Post:***

[“Black Panther”: A Beacon Amid A Void](#)  
[“Always Getting Into Trouble”](#)  
[Obama Ran Out Of Words. Trump Has Struggled To Find Them.](#)  
[At A School Well Versed In Drills, Gunman Deals Out Death](#)  
[New Critics Emerge For Lack Of Action On Guns: Students](#)  
[Relief For “Dreamers” No Nearer As Bills Fail](#)

#### ***Financial Times:***

[Cyril Ramaphosa Voted In As South Africa’s President](#)  
[Colombia’s Election Tests Its Democracy — And Its Peace](#)  
[Irish Drugmaker Horizon Pharma Raises Painkiller Price To \\$3,000 In US](#)

#### ***Washington Times:***

[Trump Administration Stakes Out Bipartisan Ground In Gun Debate](#)  
[Bipartisan Amnesty Dies In Senate; McCain Plan Also Fails](#)  
[Nearly 100 Immigration Plans Never Given Chance Despite “Open Debate” Talk](#)  
[Iran Devising Phone Apps For “Mass Surveillance” Of Dissidents, New Report Says](#)  
[Hollywood Activism Hurts Liberal Causes As Much As It Helps, Political Scientists Say](#)  
[Muted Mood As Kosovo Marks 10 Shaky Years Of Independence](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Florida High School Shooting; Florida High School Shooting-Gunman; Florida High School Shooting-Survivors; Florida High School Shooting-WH; Florida High School Shooting-Victims; Florida High School Shooting-Weapon; Child Abduction Rescue; Russia Probe-Bannon.

**CBS:** Florida High School Shooting; Florida High School Shooting-Survivors; Florida High School Shooting-Gunman; Florida High School Shooting-WH; Florida High School Shooting-FBI; School Attack Foiled; Florida High School Shooting-Victim.

**NBC:** Florida High School Shooting; Florida High School Shooting-Investigation; Florida High School Shooting-Gunman; Florida High School Shooting-WH; School Attack Foiled; Olympic Medalist; Flu Epidemic; Olympic Skiers.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida High School Shooting – 45 minutes, 50 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Florida High School Shooting; NYC-Bomb Makers; Immigration Deal.

**CBS:** Florida High School Shooting; Florida High School Shooting-Congress; Immigration Deal; Flu Epidemic; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Florida High School Shooting; Immigration Deal.

**NPR:** Florida High School Shooting; Immigration Deal; Trump Admin-North Korea; Wall Street News.

## Washington Schedule

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**Today's Events In Washington.****White House:**

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Receives a briefing on the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School tragedy; signs H.R. 582, Kari's Law.

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — Delivers keynote remarks at a Republic National Committee event; participate in a walking tour of the Hidalgo Texas Port of Entry; participates in a roundtable discussion on immigration with U.S. Customs and Border Protection; participates in a boat tour of the U.S.-Mexico border on the Rio Grande; participates in a walking tour along a bollard wall.

**US Senate:** 9:45 AM Senate Finance Committee field hearing on trade enforcement and infrastructure – International Trade, Customs, and Global Competitiveness Subcommittee field hearing on 'Trade Enforcement and Infrastructure: Safeguarding our Industrial Base from Present and Future Challenges', with testimony from Alliance for American Manufacturing President Scott Paul; Beaver Lawrence Labor Council President Rick Galiano; Catalyst Connection President and CEO Petra Mitchell; and U.S. Steel Corporation Managing Director of Governmental Affairs Todd Young Location: Community College of Beaver County, Monaca, PA <http://finance.senate.gov>

**US House:** 9:00 AM POSTPONED: Monetary Policy and Trade Subcommittee hearing on 'Evaluating CFIUS: Administration Perspectives' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

9:00 AM POSTPONED: Communications and Technology Subcommittee hearing on 'Federal Communications Commission: Budget and Oversight' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2123, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission briefing on Bahrain – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission briefing on 'Bahrain Seven Years Later', with a panel of Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain Executive Director Husain Abdulla, Gulf Center for Human Rights consultant Maryam al-Khawaja, Human Rights Watch Washington Director Sarah Margon, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Director of Policy and Research Dwight Bashir, and Project on Middle East Democracy Deputy Director for Policy Andrew Miller providing a 'comprehensive update on the current human rights situation, the prospects for democratic reforms, and the implications for security and stability in the region' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2200, Washington, DC <http://tlhrc.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/TLHRCommission>

12:00 PM Environment America Congressional briefing on moving to a 100% renewable energy future – Environment America, in conjunction with Democratic Reps. Jared Polis, Pramila Jayapal, Raul Grijalva, and Jared Huffman, hold Congressional briefing on moving to a 100% renewable energy future. Former Tennessee Valley Authority head / former New York Power

Authority head / former Los Angeles Department of Power and Water head David Freeman, Institute for Energy and Environmental Research President Arjun Makhijani, and Environment America Energy Program Director Rob Sargent discuss 'the necessity, feasibility, and desirability of a transition to clean energy' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2168, Washington, DC [www.environmentamerica.org](http://www.environmentamerica.org) <https://twitter.com/EnvAm>

Congress breaks for Presidents Day recess until Feb. 26.

**Other:** 8:30 AM Dem Rep. Adam Schiff speaks at CFR – Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff speaks at the Council on Foreign Relations, discussing 'the national security implications of Russia's U.S. election interference, North Korea's nuclear program, and the United States' potential withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)' Location: Council on Foreign Relations, 1777 F St NW, Washington, DC [www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org) [https://twitter.com/CFR\\_org](https://twitter.com/CFR_org)

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Another escapee from President Trump Penitentiary is making the rounds: Reince Priebus. You might remember Reince Priebus as the man nobody remembers. ... He said for all the stories about how chaotic everything is, take everything you've heard and multiply it by 50. My God, how many porn stars did this President sleep with?"

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Vice President Pence is shedding light on what he did and did not do when he was seated in front of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un's sister during the [Winter Olympics] opening ceremony. Pence explained he didn't avoid her – he ignored her, like he does all women."

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Meanwhile, in North Korea, even though North Korea sent athletes, cheerleaders, and a delegation to the Olympics, they actually showed only a little coverage of the games on television there, which is probably for the best. If the people saw the Olympic torch, they'd probably just be bummed they don't have heat where they are."

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- Nevada Appeal: Documentary, Exhibit Cover Story Of American Flat Mill.
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- Pahrump (NV) Valley Times: BLM Extends Public Input Deadline In S.

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## DOI In The News

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### Despite Complaints, Interior Boss Pushing Big Reorganization.

The [AP](#) (2/14, Elliott) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is moving ahead with a plan to reorganize his department, "despite growing opposition to his proposal to move hundreds of public employees out of Washington and create a new organizational map that largely ignores state boundaries." Rep. Raul Grijalva, the ranking Democrat on the House Committee on Natural Resources, "suspects the plan" could be "an attempt to undercut the department by pressuring senior employees to quit rather than relocating, leaving positions unfilled and creating confusion about who regulates what." Grijalva and Rep. Donald McEachin on Wednesday "accused Zinke of withholding key information from lawmakers and trying to implement the plan piecemeal while avoiding full scrutiny from Congress."

[The Hill](#) (2/14, Greenwood) reports that Heather Swift, a spokeswoman for the Interior Department, said that the agency has discussed the proposal with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, "but does not have a final plan in place." Swift also said that the plan has wide bipartisan support in Congress, "as well as state governments."

### Trump Boosts Budgets For Offshore Energy Agencies.

[Offshore Energy Today](#) (2/13) reports the new federal budget proposed by the Trump administration calls for increases for "two government agencies supporting the development of the nation's offshore energy resources." Under the proposed budget, "the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE)" would receive \$379.2 million of the Interior Department's \$11.7 billion budget. Under the plan, BOEM would receive an additional \$10.9 million compared to its 2018 budget, while BSEE would receive an additional \$21.7 million. BSEE Director Scott Angelle said, "The President's proposed FY 2019 budget will enable BSEE to fulfill its mission to ensure the safe and environmentally



sustainable exploration, development, and production of America's offshore energy resources." Additional coverage was provided by [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (2/14, Passut).

### **Five Things You May Have Missed In Trump's Infrastructure Plan.**

In continuing coverage on President Trump's Infrastructure plan. [The Hill](#) (2/14, Shelbourne) reports that the proposal suggests selling off federal assets that "would be better managed by state, local, or private entities." Two assets mentioned for potential sales are Reagan National Airport and Dulles International Airport. The proposal writes, "Federal ownership of these assets can result in sub-optimal investment decisions and create risk for taxpayers." The article points out that the airports are currently leased by MWWA, which does not use tax money to run the airport. The article adds that Virginia Democrats criticized the proposal's recommendation to sell federal assets. Sen. Mark Warner said, "Selling off property like the GW Parkway, Dulles Airport, and Reagan National will not improve our infrastructure – it will only mean higher costs for the traveling public." Rep. Don Beyer described the idea as "particularly outrageous" and criticized the Trump Administration for not discussing the option with local lawmakers.

### **Arizona Lawmakers Mull Tax Break For Power Plant Coal.**

The [AP](#) (2/14, Christie) reports the Arizona Legislature has been "asked to exempt coal used in a power plant on the Navajo Nation from the state's sales tax as a way to help make the plant more attractive for potential buyers." The Navajo Generating Station "is set to close at the end of 2019 unless a new owner can be found." Peabody Energy owns the Keyenta Mine that supplies coal to the plant and "is pushing the tax exemption approved Wednesday by a House committee on a 6-3 vote." The AP adds "the tax cut would cost the state general fund about \$35 million, some of which is passed on to K-12 schools, counties and cities." Navajo County "would lose excise taxes it collects on the coal sales."

### **Reince Reveals Trump Screaming Fit At Inaugural Crowd Size.**

The [Daily Mail](#) (2/14, Earle) reports that "former White House chief of staff Reince Priebus is providing a new behind-the-scenes look at President Trump's private rants over the size of his inaugural crowd." Trump "called Priebus on his cell phone to vent at 6 am after reading coverage of the inaugural crowd size in the Washington Post." Priebus recalled that Trump told him, "call [Interior Secretary] Ryan Zinke. Find out from the Park Service. Tell him to get a picture and do some research right away." According to the article, "the episode provided a preview of the coming turmoil of the Trump administration, and instantly cost then-press secretary Sean Spicer a measure of credibility when he insisted Trump had the the most people watching his inauguration 'ever.'"

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Warren: 'Never Used' Native American Claim To Advance Career.**

The [AP](#) (2/14, Daly) reports that Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), making "a surprise appearance before the National Congress of American Indians," on Wednesday said that President Trump "is disrespecting Native Americans by referring to her as 'Pocahontas,' and that while she does not claim membership in any tribe, she has never used her ancestry 'to get a break' or advance her career." The AP adds, "Questions about Warren's ancestry first surfaced during her 2012 Senate run, when...law school directories from the Association of American Law Schools from 1986 to 1995 surfaced that put" her "on the association's list of 'minority law teachers' when she was teaching at the University of Texas and the University of Pennsylvania. Warren said she listed herself with Native American heritage because she hoped to meet people with similar roots."

[Politico](#) (2/14, Lima, Dezenski) reported that Warren pushed "back against...Trump's attacks on her ethnicity." Politico added, "Warren said her mother's family was 'part Native American.' 'And my daddy's parents were bitterly opposed to their relationship,' she said. 'So, in 1932, when Mother was 19 and Daddy had just turned 20, they eloped.' She added: 'The story they lived will always be a part of me. And no one – not even the president of the United States – will ever take that part of me away.'" Politico said Trump "has repeatedly derided Warren, who says her family is part Cherokee, as 'Pocahontas.'"

The [Washington Times](#) (2/14, McLaughlin) reports that Warren, who faces reelection this fall, "stood by her claim that she is part Cherokee and Delaware Indian," but "said she 'never used my family tree to get a break or get ahead' and 'never used it to advance my career.' The

surprise appearance at the conference came a month after the Boston Globe ran a story in which Democrats and political observers speculated that Mrs. Warren's 2020 political aspirations could be hurt if she did not do a better job of explaining why she identified as Native American in the past."

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Martin) reports, "Beyond Mr. Trump's ridicule, some American Indian activists have pressured Ms. Warren to be more straightforward about her heritage and to also be a more aggressive advocate for the tribes." Those "demands, combined with the attention that Mr. Trump commands with his mockery, prompted her to try to engage in what one supporter of hers allowed was something of a deck-clearing going into her expected re-election in November and before a Democratic [presidential] primary race that will effectively start at the end of the year."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/14, Quinn) quoted Warren as saying, "Our country's disrespect of Native people didn't start with President Trump. It started long before President Washington ever took office. But now we have a president who can't make it through a ceremony honoring Native American war heroes without reducing Native history, Native culture, Native people to the butt of a joke. The joke, I guess, is supposed to be on me."

[USA Today](#) (2/14, Estepa) reports that Warren "was referring to a speech the president gave in November to honor Native American war heroes. 'You were here long before any of us were here,' the president told the veterans at the time. 'Although we have a representative in Congress who they say was here a long time ago. They call her Pocahontas,' he said, referring to Warren."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Wang) reports, "In 2016, The Washington Post's Fact Checker declined to assign a rating to Trump calling Warren a liar for claiming Native American ancestry, saying: We found no proof that she ever marked a form to tell the schools about her heritage, nor any public evidence that the universities knew about her lineage before hiring her. Still, we found that Warren's relying on family lore rather than official documentation to make an ethnic claim raised serious concerns about Warren's judgment."

In an online article, [CNN](#) (2/14, Bradner) reported that Warren "said she intends to turn 'Pocahontas'-style attacks on her into opportunities to highlight the successes and struggles of Native Americans. 'I'm here today to make a promise: Every time someone brings up my family's story, I'm going to use it to lift up the story of your families and your communities,' she said."

[Roll Call \(DC\)](#) (2/14, Lesniewski) reported that the RNC weighed in on "Warren's speech, calling her 'Fauxcahontas' in a message to reporters and citing reports questioning the validity of her claims about her heritage. 'She failed to apologize to the actual Native Americans in the audience and continued to insist that she really is a Native American, despite the long list of evidence that indicates otherwise,' Research Director and Deputy Communications Director Michael Reed said in an email."

### **Feds Want End To Texas Suit Over Indian Child Welfare Act.**

[Law360](#) (2/14, Westney) reports that the Interior Department "urged a federal judge Tuesday to dismiss a suit led by Texas alleging a federal law that sets rules for adoption and custody cases involving Native American children is unconstitutional, saying challenges to the law belong in state court."

## **Bureau Of Indian Education**

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### **Congress Presses BIE Director For Answers On Chemawa, Native Education.**

[Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) (2/14, Manning, Schick) reports that Bureau of Indian Education Director Tony Dearman appeared before the House Committee on Education and the Workforce on Wednesday "to answer questions about Chemawa Indian School, budget cuts and his agency's efforts to reform long-ailing programs for Native education across the country." In November, Rep. Suzanne Bonamici and "fellow members of the Oregon delegation sent a list of questions to the Bureau of Indian Affairs following an OPB investigation that revealed health and safety shortcomings, questionable diplomas and a culture of secrecy and retaliation at the Salem boarding school." Dearman "said responses are coming to the Oregon delegation's questions." Dearman "also announced plans for a meeting at Chemawa this month to address known problems at off-reservation boarding schools."

Additional coverage was provided by [KUOW-FM](#) Seattle (2/14).

## Bureau Of Land Management

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### Museum Looking To Extend Rock Sculptures' Nevada Stay.

The [AP](#) (2/14) reports that the Nevada Museum of Art is "working to keep a popular rock art installation west of the Las Vegas Strip in the state through the rest of year or longer if possible." According to the museum, "about 1,000 people have visited the Seven Magic Mountains daily for the past two years." The museum is "working with Bureau of Land Management and agencies to keep the \$3.5 million artwork featuring fluorescent boulders for a while longer." The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (2/14, Kane) reports that the art installation by Italian artist Ugo Rondinone is scheduled to come down in May.

### BLM Employees Receive Recognition.

[KREX-TV](#) Grand Junction, CO (2/13, Chryssafis) reports that several Bureau of Land Management employees in Grand Junction were recognized on Monday. The National Heritage Hero award was given to the Grand Junction Ethnobotany Team. The Eric Finstick Stewardship award was given to Collin Ewing, who works as the BLM Conservation Area Manager for McInnis Canyons and Dominguez Escalante.

### BLM Gathering 1,300 Horses In Elko, White Pine Counties.

The [Elko \(NV\) Daily Free Press](#) (2/14) reports that the Bureau of Land Management is "rounding up more horses in eastern Nevada than expected, but leaving more on the range than the 'appropriate management level' advises." The BLM "began a helicopter-assisted gather Jan. 31 in the overpopulated Triple B Complex in Eastern Nevada." According to the article, "approximately 1,400 wild horses are being gathered, of which 1,300 excess horses will be removed."

### Documentary, Exhibit Cover Story Of American Flat Mill.

[Nevada Appeal](#) (2/14) reports that the Bureau of Land Management, Carson City District "released an American Flat Mill documentary and is continuing to host a mobile exhibit highlighting the history of the 1920s United Comstock Merger Mill at American Flat, also known as the American Flat Mill." BLM geologist Dan Erbes said, "The American Flat Mill will be missed by a number of people in the area. Thanks to all who participated in the documentary highlighting the history of this icon. While the mill may be gone, sharing a variety of media with the public ensures its story and relevance is not forgotten."

### Wild Horse, Burro Adoption And Sale Bound For Lebanon.

The [Wilson \(TN\) Post](#) (2/14) reports that the Bureau of Land Management "plans to hold a wild horse and burro adoption and sale in Lebanon on Friday, Feb. 16, and Saturday, Feb. 17." The event will "feature more than 50 wild horses and burros."

### BLM Extends Public Input Deadline In S.

Nevada. The [Pahrump \(NV\) Valley Times](#) (2/14) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has "extended the deadline for public input on the Revised Draft Southern Nevada District Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement." The new deadline is March 23.

## Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

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### Denied Mic, Foes Of Offshore Drilling Plan Hold Rallies.

The [AP](#) (2/14, Parry) reports the lack of microphones at Bureau of Ocean Energy Management-sponsored public hearings on a proposed offshore drilling plan is prompting opponents to the plan on both coasts "to hold their own meetings before the official ones begin." Executive Director of New Jersey's Clean Ocean Action Cindy Zipf said, "The government works for the people. I understand it's uncomfortable to have a bad idea and be held accountable for it, but that's what they're proposing." Attendees to the official meetings are allowed "to comment online...on laptops the agency provides" or "hand BOEM officials written comments to be included in the record." BOEM spokesperson Tracey Moriarty defended the format, and said, "We find this approach to be more effective than formal oral testimony."

Additional coverage was provided by [Greenwire](#) (2/14).

*Sanford Takes Shot At Trump In Oil-Drilling Debate As SC Opponents, Supporters Rally.*

[Columbia \(SC\) State](#) (2/13, Fretwell) reports protesters “flooded the State House grounds Tuesday, speaking out against President Donald Trump’s plan to open S.C. waters to drilling.” The protest “was the first activity in a day of public meetings surrounding the Trump administration’s proposal” and attended by “a dozen state legislators of both political parties and coastal residents who had bused to Columbia.” Bureau of Ocean Energy Management spokeswoman Connie Gillette estimated the subsequent BOEM-sponsored hearing drew more than 250 people. Gillette said, “I would say there were more people here tonight that probably opposed, but there were a fair amount that just wanted information.” The [Charleston \(SC\) Post and Courier](#) (2/13, Petersen) reports “more than 200 protestors from across South Carolina descended on the Statehouse to shout their opposition to oil and natural gas exploration and drilling offshore,” but “[f]ewer people showed than organizers hoped.” Additional reporting was provided by [WLTX-TV](#) Columbia, SC (2/13).

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Will Texas Hornshell Listing Impact Southeast New Mexico Land Rights?**

The [Carlsbad \(NM\) Current-Argus](#) (2/14, Hedden) reports that local landowners and politicians are concerned “the recent listing of the Texas hornshell mussel could impact land and water rights in southeast New Mexico.” The hornshell was listed as an endangered species last week by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), “which could limit local access to the Black River where the mollusk is known to live in New Mexico.” Environmentalists claimed “the listing could provide sanctuary for the hornshell, while the subsequent federal regulations could improve the health of the river.” However, Rep. Steve Pearce “challenged the FWS listing as a potential negative influence on the local communities and industry.”

### **Advocacy Group Sues Over Construction Of Broomfield Apartments Near Nesting Bald Eagles.**

The [Boulder \(CO\) Daily Camera](#) (2/14, Bear) reports that “an eagle advocacy group this week filed a federal lawsuit demanding that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service review a permit related to the construction of a Broomfield apartment complex that sits near a pair of nesting bald eagles.” The plaintiff, Front Range Nesting Bald Eagle Studies, “alleges that the defendants improperly issued a ‘take permit’ to a developer – Indiana-based The Garrett Companies – that will shield the company from liability should it inadvertently kill or disturb the eagles during construction of the Caliber at Flatirons apartment complex.” An official with the FWS “confirmed the permit has been issued, but declined to comment because the case is under litigation.”

### **Enviros Sue EPA, FWS For Release Of Info On 3 Pesticides.**

[Law360](#) (2/14, Phillis) reports that the Center for Biological Diversity on Tuesday filed a lawsuit In D.C. District Court “against two government agencies, alleging they violated public records law by failing to release information about how certain pesticides might harm Endangered Species Act-protected animals and habitats.” The environmental group is asking “the court to say the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service violated the Freedom of Information Act and to force them to release the requested records.”

### **They Harassed Gators And Panthers In The Glades, Cops Say. Their Video Busted Them.**

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/14, Goodhue) reports that “two Miami men are behind bars following a year-long investigation by state and federal wildlife officers who viewed several online videos of one of the men handling federally protected Florida panther kittens and wrestling and harassing several alligators in the Big Cypress National Preserve.” According to the article, “Alfredo Lopez de Queralta, 45, and Javier Torres, 42, were arrested Tuesday on eight felony counts each of killing, injuring or possessing alligators or eggs without authority and eight misdemeanor counts pertaining to handling endangered or threatened species.” The [Daily Mail](#) (2/14, Haney) reports that “the arrests of Queralta and Torres come after a year-long investigation by state and federal officials, which kicked off when authorities watched a YouTube video the two had posted on February 22, 2017.”

## **National Park Service**

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### **Senate Subcommittee Testimony: New Parks Not A Priority.**

The [Ste. Genevieve \(MO\) Herald](#) (2/14) reports that P. Daniel Smith, deputy director of the National Park Service, on February 14 testified before the Senate Subcommittee on National Parks "about pending legislation, and his comments presented a little different perspective from the current administration." Smith's statement said the Interior Department "supports 'the goals of the legislation' to establish the Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park, but he added that the National Park Service has other financial priorities." Smith said in his testimony, "The National Park Service has a deferred maintenance backlog of over \$11 billion. The administration's focus is to reduce this backlog and to address other critical national park needs. For this reason, funding for new units to the national park system is not a priority in the administration's [Fiscal Year] 2019 budget."

### **Significant Historical Site Added To Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.**

[KSMU-FM](#) Springfield, MO (2/14, Skalicky) reports that "Wilson's Creek National Battlefield has expanded by 60 acres." The land, "on the southeast boundary of the park, was the first position of Colonel Franz Sigel's troops during the Battle of Wilson's Creek." The Civil War Trust and the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation collaborated "to purchase the property, which was acquired on January 22." The property was conveyed to the Interior Department and will be managed by Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Christian County \(MO\) Headliner News](#) (2/14).

### **Park Police Offers Response After Canceling Meeting With Local Politicians.**

[WTOP-FM](#) Washington (2/15, Alim, Cloherty) reports that "a meeting Tuesday between U.S. Park Police, a D.C. delegate and a Virginia congressman was meant to discuss a proposed bill about required use of body and dashboard cameras for uniformed federal officers." However, "U.S. Park Police Chief Robert MacLean canceled that meeting with D.C. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton and U.S. Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., and in a statement, Park Police said lawmakers later indicated they wanted to talk about the deadly police-involved shooting that happened last November." According to the article, "since the FBI is leading the ongoing investigation into that shooting, Park Police did not want to discuss it in order to 'ensure the integrity of the investigation.'" With regards to the proposed bill, Park Police stated, "While the USPP is prepared to discuss cameras, the USPP is not prepared to take a position on legislation."

### **Where To Celebrate Frederick Douglass's 200th Birthday Around D.C.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, Hahn) reports that the National Park Service will celebrate the 200th anniversary of abolitionist Frederick Douglass's birth on Feb. 17 and 18 at Cedar Hill, now the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site. National Park Service spokeswoman Pya Langley "says the two-day celebration will be the biggest celebration of Douglass's life at any Park Service site this year."

### **National Park Service Prepares To Make New Home Off I-295.**

The [Lincoln \(RI\) Valley Breeze](#) (2/14, Dotzenrod) reports that the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park will "soon move its headquarters to the I-295 visitor center, the underused rest area near Exit 20 with access to the Blackstone River Bikeway." The visitor center will give the National Park Service "a physical headquarters in Rhode Island." Until the NPS "occupies the 10,000-square-foot building, it will continue operations at spaces borrowed from the Old Slater Mill Association and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor."

### **Discovery History Center Debuts At Washington's Headquarters Museum In Morristown.**

[NJ News](#) (2/14) reports that the National Park Service will unveil its \$2.25 million Discovery History Center "this Saturday, Feb. 17 through Tuesday, Feb. 20, at Washington's Headquarters Museum in Morristown." According to the article, "visitors will be able to explore immersive, interactive exhibits with hands-on and multimedia experiences." In addition, there will be "talks, tours and performances showcasing the rich history of Morristown, and the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts will conduct presentations throughout the weekend."

### **3 Bitten By Potentially Rabid Fox At Saguaro National Park.**

The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/14, Frank) reports that "at least three people were attacked by a fox that is believed to be rabid at the Saguaro National Park in Pima County, officials said." The park, "in its statement released on Twitter, said it is unusual for foxes to be aggressive toward humans and the attacks indicated the fox was likely rabid." The park "said staffers will continue to search



for the fox and that visitors should be vigilant and avoid interacting with wildlife.”

### **Deanna Mitchell Named New Superintendent For Harriet Tubman National Park In Maryland.**

The [Tuskegee \(AL\) News](#) (2/15) reports that National Park Service Northeast Regional Director Gay Vietzke has named Deanna Mitchell as the new superintendent of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park. Mitchell will “begin her new assignment by the end of March. She replaces Diane Miller, who served in an interim capacity since last year.” Vietzke said, “Deanna’s skills and experience fit this new park just right. Deanna’s eight years setting up the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site will serve her well at Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad, which the National Park Service manages with the state of Maryland.”

### **Hopewell Furnace Names New Interpretive And Visitor Service Manager.**

The [Berks-Mont \(PA\) News](#) (2/14, Blackburn) reports that Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site Manager David Blackburn announced the addition of Interpretive and Visitor Service Manager Neil Koch to the staff. Blackburn said, “Neil’s experience on the National Mall and unbridled enthusiasm for the National Park Service is a fantastic addition to the Historic Site. We welcome him and look forward to his energy and leadership”

### **Reward Worth Risk For Ranger.**

The [Boulder City \(NV\) Review](#) (2/14, Goodyear) reports that Chad Corey now heads Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument in Arizona. As superintendent, Corey “said he will manage the major programs within the monument and the visitor experience, as well as everything with the staff.” He said, “It’s very humbling to me where I’ve made it to. I enjoy it and am excited to offer opportunities for visitors and my employees. It’s been very rewarding.”

### **Wild Tale Of Famed Yosemite Climber, Who Refused Rescue From El Capitan, To Be Adapted Into Film.**

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/14, Dowd) reports that “Batso and the Wall,” a film “about famed climber Warren ‘Batso’ Harding, has been picked up by 3311 Productions.” The screenplay “centers around Harding’s controversial and fascinating ascent of El Capitan’s Dawn Wall in 1970.”

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Proposed Budget Of \$608M For Territories, FAS.**

The [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (2/14) reports that President Trump has “proposed \$608 million for fiscal year 2019 through the Office of Insular Affairs for the benefit of the U.S. territories of Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the CNMI, as well for the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.” The OIA budget proposal “includes \$84.1 million in discretionary appropriations and \$523.9 million in mandatory funding.” Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Doug Domenech said, “The 2019 budget request prioritizes the department’s mission of restoring trust and fulfilling insular responsibilities. We are balancing OIA efforts to strengthen economic and health capacities in the U.S. territories and fulfilling U.S. obligations under the Compacts of Free Association to the freely associated states.”

The [Pacific News Center](#) (2/13, Kaye) reports that the budget request is “down more than \$20 million from the current fiscal year, including some reductions for Guam.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (2/13, Williams).

### **Tropical Storm Hits American Samoa With Outages, Some Damage.**

[Brinkwire](#) (2/13) reports that “some damage to buildings and wide-spread power outages were reported on American Samoa early Saturday, a day after tropical storm Gita passed near the U.S. territory in the South Pacific.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Newsweek](#) (2/13, Silva).

*Price Gouging Concerns As American Samoa Recovers From Gita.* [Radio New Zealand](#) (2/13) reports that “authorities in American Samoa have issued a warning about price gouging after Cyclone Gita hit the territory at the weekend.” Businesses are “being reminded it’s illegal to raise the price of certain consumer goods by 10 percent or more after the declaration of a state of

emergency.”

***Amata Welcomes Federal Disaster Assistance For Storm-Damaged American Samoa.*** [Marianas Variety](#) (2/14) reports that “on Monday, U.S. Congresswoman Aumua Amata welcomed President Trump’s timely response to Tropical Storm Gita and his prompt declaration at American Samoa Gov. Lolo Letalu Matalasi Moliga’s request allowing necessary disaster assistance resources to flow into American Samoa.” Amata said, “American Samoa was in the path of Tropical Storm Gita and sustained significant damaging winds and excessive rain, along with flooding and other destruction. Along with everyone on the islands, I was there during the storm, and saw the damages first hand throughout the community that are affecting my neighbors and constituents. I greatly appreciate both Governor Lolo’s prompt request for federal action and President Trump’s quick response on behalf of our people, followed by FEMA’s rapid arrival. This disaster declaration is necessary to allow much-needed federal funds, equipment and personnel to assist the recovery effort.”

### **Earthquake News: Series Of Tremors Shake Guam, Alaska & Japan Within Pacific Plate.**

The [Daily Express \(UK\)](#) (2/13, Boobyer) reports that “strong tremors have struck near Guam, Japan and Alaska within the Pacific plate as fears of Ring of Fire activity return.” Guam was “struck by four earthquakes in the early hours of Tuesday as magnitude 5.7, 5.6, 5.4 and 4.9 quakes shook the region.”

### **EXCLUSIVE: Phone And Internet Data Sent Through Undersea Cables Threatened By Chinese Monitoring.**

The [Epoch Times](#) (2/13, Wu, Philipp) reports that China “may be intercepting communications from undersea cables, placing at risk all phone and internet data passing through major networks in the Asia-Pacific region.” The article notes that “existing research shows that Chinese military branches associated with cyberespionage maintain operations near key cable landing stations.”

### **Grants Office Funds Repair For Kagman Water Distribution Lines.**

[Marianas Variety](#) (2/15) reports that “the Office of Grants Management and State Clearinghouse or OGM-SC under the Office of the Governor has initiated the full repair of two Kagman Agricultural Water Well Stations this week under the Department of Interior Office of Insular Affairs Maintenance Assistance Program.” OGM-SC Administrator Epiphania E. Cabrera Jr. said, “The complete repair of these major water distribution lines will assist the Kagman agricultural area in stabilizing their water supply. At the same, a new voltage control monitor will be installed to regulate the distribution line and we expect more improvements in the near future. CUC has played a critical role in the completion of these projects with KG-20 back up and running as of Monday. We can expect to see the gallons produced by this well to increase with the newly improved pump.”

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **County Seeks Grant For Water Quality Study.**

The [Wellsboro \(PA\) Gazette](#) (2/14, Kennedy) reports that “this Friday, Tioga County will submit a grant application to study the water quality of 75 private wells.” The county will “seek a \$194,000 grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development to conduct a baseline ground water study.” The county, working in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey, “will identify 75 private wells and test the water.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *How Trump’s 2019 Budget Would Leave Us Vulnerable To Natural Disasters.* [The Verge](#) (2/14, Becker).
- *AI Is Helping Seismologists Detect Earthquakes They’d Otherwise Miss.* [The Verge](#) (2/14, Vincent).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Interior’s Plan For Parks Is A Mixed Bag.**

In an editorial, the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/14) says that “there’s plenty to like” in

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "proposed \$11.7 billion budget proposal, especially a legislative proposal to establish a Public Lands Infrastructure Fund, which would provide up to \$18 billion to address a backlog of deferred maintenance in national parks, national wildlife refuges and Bureau of Indian Education schools." However, the paper notes that "Interior's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2019 represents a 16-percent reduction over the previous year and a 7 percent overall cut to the National Park Service." The paper "would prefer that the National Park Service not have to endure cuts at the same time it's being promised money to fix longtime problems."

### **Trump Must Reconsider Budget Cuts To Guam, Territories: Our View.**

In an editorial, the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (2/13) urges President Trump "to reconsider the spending cuts he proposes for the Office of Insular Affairs in his latest budget." According to Guam Del. Madeleine Bordallo, the Trump Administration's proposed budget for the Office of Insular Affairs "represents an 18 percent cut in funding for Guam and the other U.S. territories." The paper quotes Bordallo saying, "Our communities are already struggling with constrained budgets, and the tax law enacted last year by congressional Republicans and the Trump administration will worsen our local challenges."

### **Addressing National Park System Maintenance Will Create Montana Jobs.**

In an op-ed for the [Montana Standard](#) (2/14, McKamey), Rep. Wendy McKamey calls attention of the "massive maintenance backlog" faced by national parks. McKamey writes that "if there's any silver lining to this issue, it's that addressing deferred maintenance has the potential to create thousands of jobs." McKamey acknowledges that "the challenge for Congress will be to determine where the money comes from," but she asserts that "there is no doubt deferred maintenance should be a top spending priority."

### **At First Glance, Moving BLM Doesn't Pass Muster.**

In an editorial, the [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (2/15) questions moving the Bureau of Land Management's headquarters from Washington, D.C., to the West. The paper observes that "as part of the executive branch of government, all decisions about overall agency funding and overarching policy concerning mining, grazing, recreation and oil and gas development are made in D.C." It emphasizes that "it's essential BLM be represented in the decision-making on all of those issues. Packing everyone up and leaving town is not an option."

In an editorial, the [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/15) recognizes "some decent logic" in the proposal, but doubts "that that it could be done cheaply and the idea of creating more federal spending when the nation's public debt is over \$20 trillion puts it into the bad idea category." The paper says that "there's more important business at hand and more important ways to spend money." Furthermore, "even if the BLM did move its headquarters out west, it would still need a substantial presence in the nation's capital because that's where Congress is, it's where the White House is, it's where the bulk of the nation's federal administration is."

### **Move The Headquarters Of Federal Land Agencies West.**

In an editorial, the [Elko \(NV\) Daily Free Press](#) (2/14) supports moving the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management to the West. In the paper's view, "federal bureaucrats sheltered inside the Beltway have little appreciation of what lies in the vast open spaces of the West besides the beasts, bugs, birds and weeds that self-styled environmentalist claim need protection from devastation by ranchers, farmers, miners, lumberjacks and oil and gas explorers, who depend for their livelihoods on access to the land."

### **Another Trump Victim: Migratory Birds.**

In an op-ed for the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/14, Leslie), Jacques Leslie criticizes the Trump Administration's move to reinterpret the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Leslie claims that "the only part of the environment this administration cares about is what is under the ground, available for pumping." According to Leslie, "the beneficiaries of the new interpretation of the MBTA include coal, gas, wind and solar companies, but the biggest winner is certain to be the oil industry, which has been the target of a majority of prosecutions under the law in the last two decades ."

### **The Mining Reform America Really Needs.**

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (2/14, Krill), Jennifer Krill, executive director of Earthworks, criticizes the Trump Administration's focus on "critical minerals" for national security reasons as "either nonsense or a deliberate deception: a trojan horse built out of toothpicks and duct tape." Krill



argues that “the administration is using a national security rationale as cover for a gift to the mining industry, proposing further erosion of already flimsy community and environmental protections against the impacts of hardrock mining.” Krill asserts that “our communities need up-to-date mining laws that protect our families, our water and our future.”

### Additional Reading.

- *Boosting Offshore Drilling Is About Meeting Tomorrow's Demand, Not Just Today's.* [The Hill](#) (2/14, Wald).
- *Offshore Drilling Jeopardizes Coastal Health.* [Tallahassee \(FL\) Democrat](#) (2/14, Rackleff).
- *Let's Hear It: The Benefits Of Safe Offshore Energy.* [Breaking Energy](#) (2/14, Green).
- *Column: Florida Republican House Members Call For Offshore Drilling Ban.* [Tampa \(FL\) Tribune](#) (2/14).
- *Editorial: Meet Here About Offshore Drilling.* [Hampton Roads \(VA\) Virginian-Pilot](#) (2/15).
- *Coastlines In The Crosshairs | Paul Greenberg.* [Willoughby \(OH\) News-Herald](#) (2/14, Greenburg).
- *The Air Force Wants To Expand Into Nevada's Wild Desert.* [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (2/14, Wiles).
- *Opinion/Commentary: Another Attack On Our Desert.* [Santa Clarita Valley \(CA\) News](#) (2/15, Castro).
- *Alyssa Milano: What Donald Trump's Infrastructure Plan Means For My Family—And For Yours.* [Vogue](#) (2/14, Milano).

## Top National News

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### Trump Offers Prayers And Condolences To Florida Shooting Victims.

President Trump commented on the Wednesday afternoon mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida on Twitter, as did the First Lady. The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, story 3, 0:30, Glor) reported, “The President [wrote](#), ‘My prayers and condolences to the families of the victims of the terrible Florida shooting. No child, teacher or anyone else should ever feel unsafe in an American school.’ The First Lady, who spent part of the day with young hospital patients in Maryland, [wrote](#), ‘My heart is heavy over the school shooting in Florida. Keeping all affected in my thoughts & prayers.’”

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/14, story 7, 0:55, Muir) reported, “Since taking office, President Trump has addressed the nation three times after mass shootings, something his predecessors had to do.” ABC’s Cecilia Vega: “There’s been a theme in many of President Trump’s remarks. After the shooting in Texas, he said it would be a little too soon to talk about gun laws. After the massacre in Las Vegas, he said, we will talk about gun laws as time goes on. There has not been a very serious public policy conversation about gun control here at this Administration, in this White House.”

[Politico](#) (2/14, Lima) reports that the White House said Wednesday afternoon that the President “was monitoring the situation.” [CNN](#) (2/14, Malloy) reports on its website that Trump was briefed by DHS Secretary Nielsen, and “spoke to Florida Gov. Rick Scott and offered federal assistance if needed.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/14, Boyer) reports that the President “offered federal assistance and the FBI was helping in the investigation. The bureau quickly set up a website for those at the school to upload images or videos they may have taken.” [The Hill](#) (2/14, Anapol) reports that the regular White House news briefing was canceled due to the shooting.

**At Least 17 Dead, 15 Injured.** The three broadcast networks devoted the bulk of their newscasts to the shooting, which has so far resulted in 17 deaths and left 15 others injured. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/14, lead story, 4:40, Muir) reported, “These images now emerging: inside the school, students hiding from the gunfire; armed SWAT teams entering, going classroom to classroom. ... At this hour, a suspect is in custody,” a former student named Nikolas Cruz. ABC’s Victor Oquendo: “Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School turned into a war zone in seconds. Just after 2:00 p.m., as students were leaving school for the day, a shooter opening fire inside.” On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, lead story, 3:40, Glor), Manuel Bojorquez reported, “The gunman appears to have pulled the school’s fire alarm to create chaos, and then began firing. Those who could, ran, hiding in classrooms, even closets, while the shooting continued. ... The sheriff says the alleged gunman was captured off campus. He was seen surrounded by police,

being placed into custody."

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/14, lead story, 3:00, Holt), Tammy Leitner reported on "teens streaming out of the building single file, hands in the air, images reminiscent of Columbine and many other shootings. Officials calling it a mass casualty incident." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/14, story 3, 1:55, Muir) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, story 2, 1:40, Glor) also interviewed eyewitnesses.

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/14) reports, "An American nightmare unfolded" at the school "after an expelled teenager returned to campus and opened fire with an assault rifle...in the worst school shooting in Florida history." Authorities say that 19-year-old Cruz "walked the halls of the high school wielding an AR-15 and multiple magazines. ... Police say Cruz, known to other students as a loner obsessed with weapons, shot his way onto campus," and later "managed to slip in with his former classmates and make it off campus before he was taken into custody." The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Burch, Mazzei) reports that according to Sen. Bill Nelson, Cruz was well-prepared. After being briefed by the FBI, Nelson said in an interview, "The shooter wore a gas mask, had smoke grenades, and he set off the fire alarm so the kids would come out of the classrooms."

The [AP](#) (2/15, Spencer, Kennedy) reports, "Authorities offered no immediate details...or any possible motive, except to say that he had been kicked out of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, which has about 3,000 students." [USA Today](#) (2/14, James, Bohatch) reports that according to one teacher, Cruz "had previously attracted so much concern that school administrators banned him from campus." His "former classmates say he had a hot temper and a history of making dark, gun-related jokes." [Reuters](#) (2/14, Woodall) reports that as a freshman, Cruz had been part of the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corp program at the school.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Balingit, Larimer) reports that an Instagram account that appeared to belong to Cruz "showed several photos of guns. One appeared to show a gun's holographic laser sight pointed at a neighborhood street. A second showed at least six rifles and handguns laid out on a bed with the caption 'arsenal.' ... One of the most disturbing appeared to show a dead frog's bloodied corpse." Former FBI profiler Clint Van Zandt told [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/14, story 3, 1:45, Holt), "Any time we see a shooter like this, there are always pre-incident indicators. They either tell someone [or] they write about it on the Internet or some social network page. We never see an individual just totally act out of the dark."

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Haag, Kovalesski) reports that Cruz "was enrolled at another Broward County school, officials said." Those who knew him "described him as a 'troubled kid' who enjoyed showing off his firearms and whose mother would resort to calling the police to have them come to their home to try to talk some sense into him." One student told a local television station, "A lot of people were saying that it would be him. They would say he would be the one to shoot up the school."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14, Kamp, Calvert) reports that the incident was the deadliest school shooting since Sandy Hook in 2012, and the third-deadliest school shooting in modern US history, after Sandy Hook and the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting. It was the sixth high school shooting so far this year that resulted in injury or death, according to Everytown for Gun Safety. Kristen Dahlgren reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/14, story 4, 1:55, Holt) that according to the group, "this is the 18th time a gun was fired on school grounds this year." On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/14, story 4, 1:50, Muir), Pierre Thomas reported that the US has been "averaging more than 300 mass shootings in [each of] the last three years."

**Unfounded Rumor Spreads That Shooter Was DACA Recipient.** Fact-checking site [Snopes](#) (2/14) writes that "almost immediately after his name was made public, social media users, apparently inspired by nothing more than a Spanish-sounding surname, began spreading an unfounded claim" that Cruz "is an undocumented DACA recipient. ... No information has been provided by investigators or witnesses to support the claim that Cruz is an undocumented immigrant or a DACA recipient."

**Nelson, Rubio Disagree About Reopening Gun Control Debate.** Florida's senators disagreed about whether the shooting should renew the debate over gun control. Sen. Bill Nelson said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/14), "We ought to say, enough is enough. ... How did the shooter obtain the weapon? Was it a high-caliber weapon? Was it obtained lawfully? And if so, that ought to have people to start thinking about such things as background checks." He later said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/14), "We tried to pass Dianne Feinstein's bill which was, if you're on the terrorist watch list as a terrorist, you cannot buy a gun. And we couldn't even get that passed. So you see the difficulty of getting any of this legislation passed." Nelson said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/14), "What does it take for us to come to our senses as a civilized and loving people to stop this mass murder?"

But Sen. Marco Rubio said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/14) that "it's not" appropriate to talk about gun control right now, "only because people don't know how this happened. Who this person is, what motivated them, how did they get a hold of the weapon. It's important to know that before you jump to conclusions that there's a law we could have passed that could have prevented it."

**Himes Says Congress "Will Do Absolutely Nothing."** Rep. Jim Himes (D-CT) said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/14), "There is a sense of resignation right here right now. The pattern will be perfectly predictable. There will be a moment of silence. People will wish everybody thoughts and prayers and sympathy for the victims, and then the Congress of the United States will do absolutely nothing." He added, "This institution is not going to move. ... Twenty dead babies in Connecticut wasn't enough to move the heart of this place."

### **Trump Says He Is "Totally Opposed To Domestic Violence Of Any Kind."**

President Trump's brief comments on domestic violence in the wake of the ongoing controversy over ex-White House Staff Secretary Rob Porter receive brief coverage from many sources, with most saying Trump "broke his silence." Further coverage focuses on continuing scrutiny of Chief of Staff Kelly's role in securing Porter's temporary security clearance, and on how much Kelly knew about the allegations against Porter.

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, story 7, 2:30, Glor) reported that Trump "broke his silence on domestic violence today, a week after a top White House aide accused of spousal abuse was force to resign. The President's chief of staff is also under pressure to explain what he knew and when." CBS' Chip Reid: "White House officials tell CBS News that the Rob Porter situation is 'a mess that keep getting worse,' and that it's creating new divisions among White House staff. It took a full week after the Rob Porter story became public for President Trump to weigh in on domestic violence. ... But it's unclear whether that brief statement will do much to quell the turmoil generated" by the White House's handling of the case.

[NBC Nightly News](#) (2/14, story 5, 0:40, Holt) briefly reported that "several days after President Trump defended Porter...the President broke his silence in remarks from the Oval Office." Trump: "I'm totally opposed to domestic violence of any kind. Everyone knows that, and it almost wouldn't even have to be said." Holt: "On Friday, two days after Porter resigned, the President defended him and said, 'We wish him well.'"

The [AP](#) (2/14, Riechmann, Miller) reports, "Breaking his silence about abuse," Trump "said Wednesday he's 'totally opposed to domestic violence.' ... The president's remarks came more than a week after the allegations" against Porter first became public and "as lawmakers on Capitol Hill launched a probe into how Porter was allowed to work at the White House under an interim security clearance despite allegations of spousal abuse."

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Davis, Haberman) reports that the President's "statement, which members of both parties had said was long overdue, came as" Kelly "faced new questions about his handling of Mr. Porter's case, including how Mr. Porter could have held a temporary high-level security clearance for more than a year in light of the allegations." The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Nakamura) reports that while "some top White House aides" including Kelly "expressed support for Porter after the initial allegations surfaced in news reports, pressure mounted on him to resign as more evidence was made public."

[Politico](#) (2/14, Lima) reports that Trump "had not made any appearances or sent any tweets denouncing domestic violence since the allegations...became public more than a week ago."

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/14, Sink), the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/14, Parsons), the [Washington Times](#) (2/14, Boyer), and [Roll Call](#) (2/14, Bennett) also briefly cover the President's remarks.

**House Oversight Committee Investigating Porter's Security Clearance.** [USA Today](#) (2/14, Korte, Shesgreen) reports that the House Oversight Committee launched an investigation into Porter's security clearance, "escalating a growing controversy into what the White House knew" about the domestic violence allegations. [The Hill](#) (2/14, Fabian) reports that Chairman Trey Gowdy sent a letter to Kelly asking for "information on the security-clearance process and whether it was followed with Porter. He also requested information on when senior officials at the White House were made aware of the accusations against the former staff secretary." Gowdy also sent an information request to FBI Director Wray. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14, Ballhaus) reports that Gowdy told CNN, "We are directing inquiries to people that we think have access to information we don't have."

[Reuters](#) (2/14, Lambert) reports that Trump "faced new pressure...from his Republican allies in Congress" over the Porter case. In addition to the House investigation, House Speaker Ryan "said the White House should improve its vetting process." Ryan said at a news conference,

"If a person committing domestic violence gets into government, then there's a breakdown in the system." [The Hill](#) (2/14, Fabian) reports that at the same event, House Majority Leader McCarthy said he and Trump had not discussed his possibly replacing Kelly.

**Pence Says Kelly Has Done "Remarkable Job" And Should Stay On.** [Roll Call](#) (2/14, Bennett) reports that Vice President Pence wants Kelly "to keep his job even as he admits officials mishandled the fallout of the Rob Porter domestic abuse scandal." [Axios](#) (2/14, Britzky) runs a 250-word piece highlighting remarks by Vice President Pence in an interview with the online publication. Pence said, "John Kelly has done a remarkable job as chief of staff...and I look forward to continuing to work with him for many, many months to come." However, Pence said, "I feel the White House could have handled this better. Any more counsel I have on this, I'll share with the President of the United States."

**McConnell Has Reportedly Advised Trump Against Firing Kelly.** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/14, Morrongiello) reports that Senate Majority Leader McConnell "has privately urged President Trump not to fire" Kelly. A "source familiar with the discussion" said that McConnell "advised Trump during a recent phone call to avoid making any significant changes to his senior-level staff, including" firing Kelly.

**Sanders Reportedly Wants Kelly Or McGahn To Address Reporters Directly.** [Politico](#) (2/14, Samuelsohn, Nussbaum, Restuccia, Johnson) reports, "Nine days into the Rob Porter scandal," White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders "is pushing for senior officials who made the decisions surrounding" Porter's security clearance "to take over the task of explaining – and defending – those decisions to the public." According to "a person close to the White House," Sanders wants Kelly or White House Counsel Don McGahn to "brief the press directly."

Dana Milbank writes in his [Washington Post](#) (2/14) column that Sanders' "daily press briefing Wednesday was scheduled for 1 p.m., then at 2 p.m. was postponed until 4 p.m., then at 4 p.m. was abandoned entirely. ... After eight days of the administration's shifting and contradictory explanations of its handling of Porter, it's quite understandable that Sanders would be at a loss for words."

**Top NEC Official Resigns After Being Told He Would Not Get Security Clearance.** [Politico](#) (2/14, Restuccia) reports that George David Banks, a senior National Economic Council official, "says he resigned on Tuesday after being informed that he would not receive a permanent security clearance" due to "past marijuana use. Like an estimated three dozen others in the White House, Banks had been working on an interim security clearance while the administration determined the status of his full clearance." Jim Acosta writes on the [CNN](#) (2/14) website that "according to information obtained by CNN from a US government official...there were more than 100 staffers in the Executive Office of the President who were operating on interim clearances" as late as November 2017.

### **Trump Endorses Grassley Immigration Bill, Derides Bipartisan Plan.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, O'Keefe, Nakamura, Debonis) reports the President "fully embraced a Republican plan Wednesday to significantly change decades-old immigration policy, and rejected any other proposals to resolve the fate of undocumented young immigrants, undercutting bipartisan negotiations on a possible solution that might prevail in the closely divided Senate." The Post adds "Trump's full-throated endorsement of legislation unveiled this week by a GOP group led by Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles E. Grassley...was issued just minutes before bipartisan senators gathered once again to strike a possible deal."

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Shear, Stolberg) describes Trump as "demanding fealty to his hard-line approach and increasing the odds of political gridlock as the Senate debates the issue." The President "urged senators to oppose any bill that did not also embrace the 'four pillars' of his immigration approach, which includes a rewrite of the nation's immigration laws that would close the country's borders to many immigrants trying to come to the United States legally." Said Trump, "I am asking all senators, in both parties, to support the Grassley bill and to oppose any legislation that fails to fulfill these four pillars." The Grassley bill "would provide a path to citizenship for 1.8 million young immigrants, end the visa lottery program, build a border wall and end what he calls 'chain migration.'" According to the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/14, Mascaro), the Grassley bill includes a "ramp-up of border enforcement that would...increase the pace of deportations."

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (2/14, Lehman) says the Grassley bill "is designed to mirror the immigration priorities the White House issued last month," and notes that Trump also said yesterday, "The overwhelming majority of American voters support a plan that fulfills the Framework's four pillars, which move us towards the safe, modern, and lawful immigration

system our people deserve.” Adds the Free Beacon, “Trump’s claim that a majority of American voters support his plan is supported by a recent Harvard-Harris poll, which found that majorities of voters support its composite four pillars, 65 percent to 35 percent, including 68 percent of Hispanics, 64 percent of Democrats, and 63 percent of liberals.” The President also “cheered legislation introduced by Reps. Bob Goodlatte (R., Va.) and Michael McCaul (R., Texas) in the House that would similarly implement the White House’s plan.”

[Reuters](#) (2/14, Cowan) reports, meanwhile, that according to Sen. Lindsey Graham, the “bipartisan plan would protect from deportation 1.8 million immigrants, known as ‘Dreamers,’” but their parents “would get no such safeguards, a concession to the White House.” The plan would also “open the door to building at least part of a wall along the US-Mexican border.” The [AP](#) (2/14, Fram, Freking) indicates that “while not specifically mentioning the bipartisan pact, Trump urged lawmakers to oppose any plan that doesn’t meet his more stringent demands, which include legal immigration curbs.” [Breitbart](#) (2/14, Munro) describes the deal as a “draft amnesty bill which would deliver just two of...Trump’s four immigration requirements,” while [Politico](#) (2/14, Everett, Schor) says it “faces an uncertain future as GOP opposition builds against any plan that deviates from...Trump’s proposal.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/14, Dinan) reports that Senate Majority Leader McConnell “accused Democrats on Wednesday of ‘stalling’ on immigration as the Senate entered its third day of debate on the issue without having held a single policy vote.” McConnell “said Democrats complained for months about the lack of a debate, yet now that he’s given them an entire week for the discussion, they have blocked any votes. That included two attempts to hold votes on a sanctuary city crackdown on Tuesday.” In an editorial, however, the [Washington Post](#) (2/14) argues that “so far,” McConnell “has done nothing to suggest he is intent on forging a deal that would protect dreamers,” and “to the contrary...gives every sign of maneuvering for political advantage, with an eye to maintaining the Republicans’ tissue-thin Senate majority in this fall’s elections.” The Post calls the bipartisan deal “plausible,” and concludes, “We hope the majority leader chooses governing over cynicism.”

***Manchin Appears To Stand Ready To Support Trump Framework.*** [Politico](#) (2/14, Schor) reports Sen. Joe Manchin “suggested Wednesday that he would back...Trump’s immigration plan, potentially giving the White House bipartisan support during a key test vote on the floor.” Manchin “told reporters after leaving a meeting of bipartisan senators working toward a less conservative immigration compromise that, judging by ‘everything I’ve seen’ of the GOP amendment executing the White House’s immigration framework, ‘I could support that.’”

***Meadows Warns Ryan Of “Consequences” If He Opposes Trump On Immigration.*** [USA Today](#) (2/14, King, Gomez, Collins) reports Speaker Ryan “found himself in a tight political spot Wednesday as Republican leaders announced plans to push an immigration bill that appeals to the most conservative wing of his party but will alienate moderates.” Ryan “and other GOP leaders said Wednesday they planned to move ahead with legislation that would slash legal immigration and give only temporary legal protections for the DREAMers, among other provisions.” Trump “endorsed that bill Wednesday.”

[Roll Call](#) (2/14, McPherson) notes “House Freedom Caucus leaders fired off fresh warning shots Wednesday to...Ryan that there will be repercussions if he moves an immigration measure that runs contrary to what...Trump and conservative Republicans campaigned on in 2016.” Said Chairman Mark Meadows, “It is the defining moment for this speaker. ... If he gets it wrong, it will have consequences for him, but it will also have consequences for the rest of the party.”

***Rove Calls For Immigration Deal.*** Karl Rove, in a column in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14), calls on Congress to settle the immigration issue by adopting a deal framed by Americans’ desires, as expressed by polls – assuming, Rove argues, the questions are put to the public in the right way. Rove argues that Dreamers should receive work permits and a citizenship path, merit preferences should be increased over preference for relatives, the diversity lottery ended, and a border wall funded. Rove concludes by reminding those seeking to reduce immigration in the US that immigration is needed to provide the country with its workers.

### **Trump Endorses Gas Tax Hike To Pay For Infrastructure Plan.**

[Axios](#) (2/14, Swan) reported yesterday the President “endorsed a 25-cent gas tax hike to pay for infrastructure at a White House meeting” Wednesday morning “with senior administration officials and members of Congress from both parties, according to two sources with direct knowledge.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/14, Niquette) notes Sen. Tom Carper confirmed “Trump told lawmakers he would support” the move “to help pay for upgrading American roads, bridges and other public works.”

[Reuters](#) (2/14, Shepardson) indicates “the White House did not confirm or deny that Trump



backed a gasoline tax hike in the meeting," though a "White House official noted that Trump 'has said everything is on the table' to achieve infrastructure improvements." Trump "expressed confidence on Wednesday that a deal could be reached," saying, "This is an issue where I really believe we can find common ground between Republicans and Democrats." The [AP](#) (2/14, Thomas) runs the same quote by a "White House spokesman" about "everything" being "on the table."

[Politico](#) (2/14, Gardner) reports that "if Trump follows through...it could mean billions of dollars in new revenue for infrastructure and help solve a problem that has bedeviled policymakers for at least a decade: The gas tax, which pays for most federal surface transportation spending, has not been keeping pace with needs." Politico adds that "policymakers have not had the political will to raise the gas tax or find another source of revenues, leaving an increasing number of states to raise their own gas taxes to compensate."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Long) reports, however, that "Republicans, who just passed major legislation to reduce taxes on businesses and families, are lukewarm on the idea of turning around and raising taxes at the pump." Sen. John Barrasso, "chairman of a key Senate committee that is working on infrastructure, attended the meeting with Trump and reiterated that a gas-tax increase remains a nonstarter."

*Will: Democrats May Have To Accept Public-Private Partnerships For Infrastructure.* In his [Washington Post](#) (2/14) column, George Will writes that infrastructure "is not immune to the rhetorical extravagance that infects all of today's political discourse." State and local governments "always have done, and always should do, most infrastructure spending," and the Obama Administration's stimulus "taught a useful lesson: Because of the ever-thickening soup of regulations, there are no 'shovel-ready' projects." If Democrats are interested in infrastructure, Will writes, they may "have to embrace public-private partnerships that generate revenue streams – from tolls, user fees and other devices – for investors."

### **In Letter To Grassley, Sessions Calls Sentencing Reform Bill "A Grave Error."**

The [Washington Times](#) (2/14, Mordock) reports Attorney General Sessions "has slammed a bipartisan drug sentencing reform bill, calling the legislation 'a grave error.'" In a letter to Sen. Chuck Grassley, Sessions "wrote that he 'strongly' urges the Senate to consider the legislation's potential ramifications." Added Sessions, "The legislation would reduce sentences for a highly dangerous cohorts of criminals, including repeat dangerous drug traffickers and those who use firearms and would apply retroactively to many dangerous felons, regardless of citizenship or immigration status."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Demirjian) reports that Grassley "is 'incensed' at...Sessions for trying to derail" the "bipartisan bill...on the eve of its first procedural vote." The senator "retorted publicly via Twitter, giving Sessions a piece of his mind and a short reminder about who in the government makes the federal laws – and who is supposed to follow them." [Wrote](#) Grassley, "Incensed by Sessions letter An attempt to undermine Grassley/Durbin/Lee BIPARTISAN criminal just reforms. ... This bill deserves thoughtful consideration b4 my cmte. AGs execute laws CONGRESS WRITES THEM!" The Post adds "the Grassley-Sessions dispute over sentencing reform began long before Sessions joined the administration, to when both served on the Senate Judiciary Committee."

### **Stocks Continue Surge As Consumer Sentiment Hits Highest Point Since 2001.**

[Reuters](#) (2/14, Randewich) reports "Wall Street surged on Wednesday as investors shrugged off stronger-than-expected inflation data and snapped up shares of Facebook, Amazon.com and Apple." Reuters adds that "since Thursday, the S&P 500 has surged 4.56 percent, its strongest four-session performance since mid-2016." The Dow "jumped 1.03 percent to end at 24,893.49 while the S&P 500 .SPX rose 1.34 percent to finish at 2,698.63." The Nasdaq "surged 1.86 percent to 7,143.62."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14, Torry) notes the inflation concerns in a story headlined "Inflation Starts To Make A Comeback," which indicates consumer prices rose 0.5% in January, up 2.1% from 2017. In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) warns policy-makers to pay heed to inflation fears, which could erode the benefits of deregulation and the tax reform law for workers' real earnings.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/14, Hagan), meanwhile, reports that "consumer sentiment jumped last week to the highest level since February 2001, indicating Americans were shaking off turbulence in the stock market, according to the Bloomberg Consumer Comfort Index. Key."

*NYTimes Analysis, Obama Official Cast Doubt On Administration's Growth Forecasts.* Writing

for the [New York Times](#) (2/14), Neil Irwin says President Trump “has been nothing if not bold in his promises to generate supercharged economic growth,” and his “administration is making detailed projections that the economy will expand much faster in the decade ahead than it has in recent years – a forecast that underpins the Trump policy agenda.” The Administration “forecasts growth in the neighborhood of 3 percent through the next decade,” which “would require some of the strongest improvements in productivity seen in decades, yet also require that interest rates not react the way they have historically when growth strengthens.” Ultimately, “a lot will have to go right for the Trump administration’s forecasts to come true.”

Along similar lines, Obama-era chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers Jason Furman argues in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) that expecting 3% growth is unrealistic – and that even maintaining a 2% growth rate could prove very difficult.

***Risky Wagers Appear Problematic In Wake Of Recent Market Volatility.*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14, Zuckerman, Banerji, Gillers) reports in a front-page that some investors who would have pursued relatively stable investments in the past, such as endowments and pension funds, recently made large wagers that sought to capitalize on the stability of financial markets, which usually involved complicated options contracts. These wagers have begun to look more problematic as volatility has recently returned to the market. Despite warnings from some observers that there are structural risks to these wagers, many investors have opted for them again in recent days, as markets have stabilized somewhat.

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

***“Why Does Trump Ignore Top Officials’ Warnings On Russia?”*** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/14) says that the half-dozen “intelligence chiefs who testified on Capitol Hill” on Tuesday agreed that “Russia interfere[d] in the 2016 election” and “is already meddling in the 2018 election by using a digital strategy to exacerbate the country’s political and social divisions.” However, President Trump “continues to refuse to even acknowledge the malevolent Russian role.” The Times adds, “So why is Mr. Trump still ignoring such conclusions? Some have said he is giving Russia a green light to tamper with the 2018 elections. That would have once been an absurd suggestion. It can no longer be dismissed out of hand.”

***“South Africa’s Zuma Leaves Behind A Broken Democracy.”*** A [New York Times](#) (2/14) editorial welcomes South African President Jacob Zuma’s resignation, which it says leaves the question of whether the ANC “can cleanse and revive itself” under Cyril Ramaphosa, who it says faces “an uphill battle.” Ramaphosa, it argues, “will need to act quickly and decisively to convince dubious voters that the ANC can clean its soiled house and deserves another chance.”

***“Donald Trump Raids The Pantry Of Poor Americans.”*** The [New York Times](#) (2/14) editorializes that President Trump’s proposal to cut the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program’s budget “by giving low-income families boxes of pasta, cereal and other nonperishable foods, rather than giving them the full amount of their benefit on electronic cards,” would “put fresh food further out of reach for 46 million low-income people.” The Times asserts that SNAP “is a relative bargain that provides fairly modest benefits to some of the poorest people in the country;” it also notes that “experts have found that increasing the value of food stamps and making them available to more people can do good things.” The Times concludes by encouraging lawmakers to keep SNAP funded without cuts in a new Farm Bill, which must be passed by the end of September.

***“Will Apathy Defeat De Blasio’s Grand Plan For Democracy?”*** The [New York Times](#) (2/14) editorializes that New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio “is an imperfect messenger for some” reforms that he advocated for during his State of the City speech on Tuesday night. The Times asserts that de Blasio’s call to remove big money from politics “might have resonated more had it come from someone who did not rely on big money in his campaigns;” the publication also questioned his goal “to create a commission to revise City Charter provisions on campaign financing,” asking why he couldn’t simply draft legislation to pursue the same result. The editorial concludes with the Times questioning de Blasio’s goal to appoint a “chief democracy officer” to increase New York’s poor turnout during elections; the Times wonders why democracy needs “an officer in charge of it, let alone a chief.”

### Washington Post.

***“The Russian Threat.”*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/14) editorializes that “the proper response to

Russian aggression” and election interference “is containment and deterrence,” and that Congress should immediately pass the bill introduced by Sens. Marco Rubio and Chris Van Hollen which “would slap punishing sanctions on any foreign power interfering in another federal election.” States and private actors should also be taking action, the Post asserts, by seeking federal assistance for developing protection from cyberattacks and “weed[ing] out” foreign bots and trolls. The fact that President Trump “may never admit to the real problem” means “everyone else in positions of responsibility must work harder.”

*“Time To Clear The Air.”* The [Washington Post](#) (2/14) editorializes that Cohen’s “statement raises more questions than it answers,” such as, “Was Mr. Trump aware or involved? Who instigated the payment? Were other payments made to other people? And – most pointedly – why give \$130,000 to silence someone with a story that supposedly has absolutely no merit?” The Post adds that “the payment of hush money seemingly to influence a presidential campaign is cause for public concern. Opinion is divided about whether there were possible violations of campaign-finance laws, and further investigation is clearly needed.”

*“Cynicism Vs. Compromise.”* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/14) argues that “so far,” McConnell “has done nothing to suggest he is intent on forging a deal that would protect dreamers,” and “to the contrary...gives every sign of maneuvering for political advantage, with an eye to maintaining the Republicans’ tissue-thin Senate majority in this fall’s elections.” The Post calls the bipartisan deal “plausible,” and concludes, “We hope the majority leader chooses governing over cynicism.”

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*“The Inflation Surge.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) warns policy-makers to pay heed to inflation fears, which could erode the benefits of deregulation and the tax reform law on worker’s real earnings.

*“Iran’s Ailing Hostages.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) editorializes that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is not a “moderate” if so many Westerners, including Americans, are in prison. The regime has also claimed that several of these prisoners have killed themselves, although they do not directly threaten or criticize the regime.

*“Private Jet-Setters Against Better Air Travel.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) criticizes the corporate jet lobby for pressuring Congress not to separate air traffic control from the Federal Aviation Administration. Studies show that the business jet industry currently pays only a small amount in aviation taxes but controls large amounts of air traffic, and therefore resists proposals to replace such taxes with user fees or end Congressional subsidies for little-used rural airports. The Journal argues that Congress should at least subject business jets to the same fees as commercial airlines if it will not allow private expertise to run the US air traffic system.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### ***Wall Street Journal:***

[Teen Gunman Kills 17 At Florida School](#)

[Inflation Starts To Make A Comeback](#)

[AT&T Focuses On DOJ Antitrust Chief In Time Warner Trial](#)

[Harvard, Hawaii Gambled On Market Calm—Then Everything Changed](#)

#### ***New York Times:***

[17 Killed In A School Shooting In Florida](#)

[Jacob Zuma’s Legacy Is A Weakened South Africa](#)

[How \\$225,000 Can Help Secure A Pollution Loophole At Trump’s E.P.A.](#)

[Trump Says He’s “Totally Opposed” To Domestic Violence](#)

[Senators Strike Deal On Immigration Despite Veto Threat](#)

[A Confident And Defiant Netanyahu Vows Not To Resign](#)

#### ***Washington Post:***

[Watchdog: VA Chief Misled Public About Cost Of Trip](#)

[A Fine Line Protecting, Mollifying Trump](#)

[Under Siege, Zuma Quits S. African Presidency](#)



[Can't Code Me Love](#)

[Shooting Reported At South Florida High School; Several Fatalities Reported](#)

**Financial Times:**

[Jacob Zuma Quits As President Of South Africa](#)

[Increase In US Inflation Sparks Bond Market Sell-Off](#)

[Netanyahu Comes Out Fighting After Police Recommend His Indictment](#)

[MetLife Hires Investigators In Search For Missing Pensioners](#)

**Washington Times:**

[17 Dead In Florida High School Shooting](#)

[Trump Legal Team Builds Case Against Mueller Interview, Cites Clinton Precedent](#)

[Mitt Romney's Senate Run Threatens To Divide GOP](#)

[Bitter Cold At Winter Olympics Chills Global-Warming Hype](#)

[New Bipartisan Immigration Plan Aids Dreamers In Exchange For Border Wall](#)

[Trey Gowdy Launches Investigation Into Hiring Of Rob Porter](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Florida High School Shooting; Florida High School Shooting-Sheriff; Florida High School Shooting-Student; Florida High School Shooting-Gunman; Florida High School Shooting-Expert Comment; Florida High School Shooting-Safety; Florida High School Shooting-WH; Winter Olympic Snowboarder; Child Abduction Trial; South Carolina Missing Child; United Air-Emergency Landing; New Alzheimer Drug; Florida High School Shooting-Recap.

**CBS:** Florida High School Shooting; Florida High School Shooting-Student; Florida High School Shooting-WH; Florida High School Shooting-Gunman; Florida High School Shooting-School Staff; US Mass Shootings; Trump-White House Staffer; Cabinet Members-Travel Costs; Florida High School Shooting-Student; Florida High School Shooting-Recap.

**NBC:** Florida High School Shooting; Florida High School Shooting-Parent; Florida High School Shooting-Gunman; US Mass Shootings; Trump-White House Staffer; Trump-Adult Film Star; Winter Olympic Snowboarder; Concussion Detection; Golfer Injury; Dog Show; Olympic Athletes.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida High School Shooting – 31 minutes, 45 seconds

US Mass Shootings – 4 minutes, 5 seconds

Trump-White House Staffer – 3 minutes, 10 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Florida High School Shooting; Chicago Officer Shot; Immigration Deal; Wall Street News.

**CBS:** Florida High School Shooting; NSA Shooting; Immigration Deal; California-Gang Sweep; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Florida High School Shooting.

**NPR:** Florida High School Shooting; Trump-White House Staffer; Wall Street News; NYC-Jail Closure Plan.

## **Washington Schedule**

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### **Today's Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with the US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — No scheduled public events.

**US Senate:** 9:00 AM Interamerican Institute for Democracy 'Threats to the U.S. in the Western Hemisphere' Forum – Interamerican Institute for Democracy 'Threats to the U.S. in the Western Hemisphere' Forum, with speakers including Republicans Sen. Marco Rubio and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen \* Held in English and Spanish with simultaneous translation Location: Cannon House Office Building, Rm 121, Washington, DC <http://www.intdemocratic.org/en/>

<https://twitter.com/Intdemocratic>

9:00 AM HHS Secretary Azar testifies to Senate Finance Committee on FY'19 budget – Hearing on 'The President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget', with testimony from Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar Location: Rm 215, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

9:30 AM CFTC Chairman Giancarlo testifies to Senate Agriculture Committee – Hearing on 'State of the CFTC: Examining Pending Rules, Cryptocurrency Regulation, and Cross-Border Agreement', with testimony from Commodity Futures Trading Commission Chairman J. Christopher Giancarlo Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 328A, Washington, DC <http://agriculture.senate.gov/>

9:30 AM Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on USNORTHCOM and USSOUTHCOM – Hearing on 'United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command', with testimony from U.S. Northern Command Commander and North American Aerospace Defense Command Commander Gen. Lori Robinson; and U.S. Southern Command Commander Adm. Kurt Tidd Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Judiciary Committee Executive Business Meeting – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including consideration of nominations of Michael Brennan to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit; Susan Paradise Baxter to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania; Daniel Desmond Domenico to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Colorado; Marilyn Jean Horan to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania; Adam Klein to be Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board Chairman; McGregor Scott to be U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of California; Gary Schofield to be U.S. Marshal for the District of Nevada; and Jonathan Mitchell to be Administrative Conference of the U.S. Chairman, plus 'S.1917 Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017' Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Col. (Ret.) Andrea Thompson to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, Francis Fannon to be Assistant Secretary for Energy Resources, and Susan Thornton to be Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 419, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Committee on Indian Affairs listening session on 'Tribal Higher Education Priorities' Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 628, Washington, DC <http://indian.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/IndianCommittee>

11:00 AM 'Families of Continental Flight 3407' group mark 9th anniversary of the crash – 'Families of Continental Flight 3407' group hold press conferences with members of the Western New York Congressional delegation and Miracle on the Hudson First Officer Jeff Skiles in Washington, DC, to commemorate the 9th anniversary of the crash. They appear with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and fellow Democratic Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand in SVC-215, U.S. Capitol Visitor Center (11:00 AM EST), then with bipartisan Reps. Chris Collins, Louise Slaughter, Brian Higgins, and Tom Reed in HC-8, U.S. Capitol (3:15 PM EST) Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC [www.3407memorial.com](http://www.3407memorial.com) <https://twitter.com/3407families>

11:00 AM Over one million petition signatures in support of Medicare-for-All delivered to Members of Congress – Public Citizen, Justice Democrats, Labor Campaign for Single Payer, National Health Care for the Homeless Council, National Nurses United, Our Revolution, Physicians for a National Health Program, and Students for a National Health Program deliver over one million petition signatures in support of a Medicare-for-All health care system to Members of Congress. Participants meet at the south entrance to the Hart Senate Office Building, followed by brief remarks from representatives of some of the groups, the visit the offices of Democratic Sens. Ron Wyden, Chris Van Hollen, Amy Klobuchar, Catherine Cortez Masto, Sherrod Brown, Ben Cardin, Michael Bennet, Dianne Feinstein, Bill Nelson, and Dick Durbin Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC [www.citizen.org](http://www.citizen.org) [https://twitter.com/public\\_citizen](https://twitter.com/public_citizen)

12:30 PM Dem Sens. Ed Markey and Richard Blumenthal call for \$1 billion investment in a universal flu vaccine – Democratic Sens. Ed Markey and Richard Blumenthal discuss 'the urgent need to invest \$1 billion for a universal flu vaccine that could be administered once or twice and provide a lifetime of protection', via press conference with Infectious Diseases Society of America President Dr Paul Auwaerter Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC 200 Washington, DC [www.markey.senate.gov](http://www.markey.senate.gov) <https://twitter.com/SenMarkey>

2:00 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

**US House:** 8:00 AM VA Secretary Shulkin testifies on FY'19 budget at House Veterans Affairs Committee hearing – Hearing on 'U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2019', with testimony from Secretary of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin, Assistant Secretary for Management and VA CFO Jon Rychalski, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resource Management Richard Chandler; Veterans Health Administration CFO Mark Yow; Veterans Benefits Administration Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary James Manker; and National Cemetery

Administration Deputy Under Secretary for Finance and Planning Matthew Sullivan \* Yesterday, a report released by the VA inspector general said that Secretary Shulkin's chief of staff Vivieca Wright Simpson edited an email and made false statements making it appear that the secretary was receiving an award from the Danish Govt, then used the 'award' as justification for the Department paying \$4,300+ in travel expenses for Secretary Shulkin's wife to go to Europe. Secretary Shulkin has called the report 'entirely inaccurate' and 'outrageous' and claimed it 'reeks of an agenda' Location: Cannon House Office Building, Rm 334, Washington, DC  
<http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

9:00 AM House Science, Space, and Technology subcommittee hearing on STEM education and careers – Research and Technology Subcommittee hearing on 'Mentoring, Training, and Apprenticeships for STEM Education and Careers', with testimony from Morgan State University Division of Research and Economic Development vice president Dr Victor McCrary; Moraine Valley Community College Computer Integrated Technologies Department chair Dr John Sands; National Institute of Metalworking Skills director Montez King; and Wichita State University president Dr John Bardo Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2318, Washington, DC  
<http://science.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HouseScience>

9:00 AM House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on sanctuary cities and the opioid epidemic – Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee hearing on 'The Effect of Sanctuary City Policies on the Ability to Combat the Opioid Epidemic', with testimony from Denver Police Protective Association President Nick Rogers; Jackson County, TX, Sheriff A.J. Louderback; Center for Immigration Studies Director of Policy Studies Jessica Vaughan; and Stanford University School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry Professor Keith Humphreys Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2141, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.house.gov/>  
<https://twitter.com/HouseJudiciary>

9:00 AM House votes on ADA Education and Reform Act – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including completion of consideration of 'H.R. 620 – ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017' Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC  
<http://www.house.gov/>

9:00 AM Interamerican Institute for Democracy 'Threats to the U.S. in the Western Hemisphere' Forum – Interamerican Institute for Democracy 'Threats to the U.S. in the Western Hemisphere' Forum, with speakers including Republicans Sen. Marco Rubio and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen \* Held in English and Spanish with simultaneous translation Location: Cannon House Office Building, Rm 121, Washington, DC <http://www.intdemocratic.org/en/>  
<https://twitter.com/Intdemocratic>

9:30 AM House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on de-risking – Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining De-risking and its Effect on Access to Financial Services', with testimony from Illinois Secretary of Financial & Professional Regulation Bryan Schneider (on behalf of Conference of State Bank Supervisors); SwypCo ATM Solutions President Tim Baxter (on behalf of National ATM Council); The Electronic Transactions Association CEO Jason Oxman; and Inter-American Dialogue Director of Migration, Remittances and Development Dr Manuel Orozco Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

9:30 AM House Small Business subcommittee hearing on agritech – Agriculture, Energy, and Trade Subcommittee hearing on 'Restoring Rural America: How Agritech is Revitalizing the Heartland', with testimony from Iowa State University Agricultural Entrepreneurship Initiative Director Kevin Kimle; Donald Danforth Plant Science Center COO Sam Fiorello; AgLaunch President Pete Nelson; and George Washington University Food Institute Senior Fellow Dr Michael Fernandez Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC  
<http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

9:30 AM House Transportation subcommittee hearing on implementation of Positive Train Control – Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee hearing on 'Oversight of Positive Train Control Implementation in the United States', with testimony from Federal Railroad Administration Chief Counsel Juan Reyes III; National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Robert Sumwalt; Association of American Railroads President and CEO Edward Hamberger; Amtrak CEO Richard Anderson; American Public Transportation Association President and CEO Paul Skoutelas; and Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Vice President and National Legislative Representative John Tolman Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2167, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM House Homeland Security subcommittee hearing on the CFATS program – Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection Subcommittee hearing on 'Industry Views of the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program' Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-

210, Washington, DC [homeland.house.gov](http://homeland.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland>

10:00 AM House Government Reform subcommittee hearing on the GSA – Government Operations Subcommittee hearing on ‘General Services Administration – Checking in with the Government’s Acquisition and Property Manager’ Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2154, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:00 AM House Natural Resources subcommittee oversight hearing on ‘The Costs of Denying Border Patrol Access’ – Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee oversight hearing on ‘The Costs of Denying Border Patrol Access: Our Environment and Security’, with testimony from Center for Immigration Studies Resident Fellow in Law and Policy Andrew Arthur; ZZ Cattle Corporation President Dan Bell; National Border Patrol Council President Brandon Judd; and Sierra Club Borderlands Campaign Co-Chair Scott Nicol Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

10:00 AM Treasury Secretary Mnuchin testifies to House Ways and Means Committee on FY’19 budget – Hearing on ‘The President’s Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Proposals’, with testimony from Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1100, Washington, DC <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/WaysandMeansGOP>

10:00 AM NG9-1-1 Institute technology showcase – NG9-1-1 Institute hosts 2018 911 Technology Showcase, including keynote from Rep. Greg Walden and demonstrators including AT&T, Motorola Solutions, Comtech, RapidSOS, and Google Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rms 2044/2045, Washington, DC <http://www.ng911institute.org/> <https://twitter.com/NG911Institute>

10:00 AM House Armed Services Committee hearing on strategic competition with China – Hearing on ‘Strategic Competition with China’, with testimony from Princeton University Woodrow Wilson School Professor of Politics and International Affairs Dr Aaron Friedberg; and Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow for China Studies Dr Ely Ratner Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCREpublicans>

10:00 AM House Workforce subcommittees joint hearing on implications of the opioid epidemic – Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee and Workforce Protections Subcommittee joint hearing on ‘The Opioids Epidemic: Implications for America’s Workplaces’, with testimony from Ziegenfelder Company President and CEO Lisa Allen (on behalf of U.S. Chamber of Commerce); University of South Carolina Assistant Professor Dr Christina Andrews; Altarum Institute Senior Health Care Analyst Corwin Rhyon; and Jackson Lewis Principal Kathryn Russo Location: Rm 2175, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://edworkforce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/EdWorkforce>

11:00 AM ‘Families of Continental Flight 3407’ group mark 9th anniversary of the crash – ‘Families of Continental Flight 3407’ group hold press conferences with members of the Western New York Congressional delegation and Miracle on the Hudson First Officer Jeff Skiles in Washington, DC, to commemorate the 9th anniversary of the crash. They appear with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and fellow Democratic Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand in SVC-215, U.S. Capitol Visitor Center (11:00 AM EST), then with bipartisan Reps. Chris Collins, Louise Slaughter, Brian Higgins, and Tom Reed in HC-8, U.S. Capitol (3:15 PM EST) Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC [www.3407memorial.com](http://www.3407memorial.com) <https://twitter.com/3407families>

11:30 AM House Speaker Paul Ryan holds weekly press conference Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC Studio A, Washington, DC [www.speaker.gov](http://www.speaker.gov) <https://twitter.com/SpeakerRyan>

12:30 PM HHS Secretary Azar testifies to House Commerce subcommittee on Department oversight – Health Subcommittee hearing on ‘Oversight of the Department of Health and Human Services’, with testimony from Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2123, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

1:30 PM Dem Rep. Bobby Scott co-hosts forum on the proposed DOL tip rule – House Education & the Workforce Committee Ranking Member Bobby Scott and other House Democratic leadership host forum on the Department of Labor proposal to allow employers to pocket employees’ tips, including the potential impact of the rule and issues with the DOL rulemaking process. Other participants include Democratic Reps. Keith Ellison, Mark Takano, and Suzanne Bonamici, Economic Policy Institute Senior Economist and Director of Policy Heidi Shierholz, Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC United) member Thea Bryan, National Employment Law Project Government Affairs Director Judy Conti, and Public Citizen Regulatory Policy Advocate Amit Narang Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2247, Washington, DC

<http://democrats.edworkforce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/edworkforcedems>

2:00 PM POSTPONED: House Homeland Security subcommittee hearing on TSA outreach and traveler engagement efforts – POSTPONED: Transportation and Protective Security Subcommittee hearing on 'The Public Face of TSA: Examining the Agency's Outreach and Traveler Engagement Efforts' Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-210, Washington, DC [homeland.house.gov](http://homeland.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland>

2:00 PM POSTPONED: House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on terrorism, drug trafficking, and organized crime – POSTPONED: Terrorism and Illicit Finance Subcommittee hearing on 'Exploring the Financial Nexus of Terrorism, Drug Trafficking, and Organized Crime' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

2:00 PM House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on USSOCOM budget – Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee hearing on 'Evolution, Transformation, and Sustainment: A Review and Assessment of the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Forces and Command', with testimony from Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict Owen West; and U.S. Special Operations Command Commander Gen. Raymond Thomas Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2212, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

2:00 PM House Natural Resources subcommittee legislative hearing – Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'H.R. 520, National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act', with testimony from Arizona Mining Vice President for Community & Government Affairs Greg Lucero; Earthworks Senior Policy Counsel Aaron Mintzes; Hecla Mining Company General Manager Doug Stiles; and New America Senior Fellow David Abraham Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

2:00 PM Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission hearing on defending prisoners of conscience – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission hearing on 'Defending Prisoners of Conscience'. Members of Congress who have served as advocates for POCs through the TLHRC-launched Defending Freedoms Project – Republican Rep. Randy Hultgren (advocate for Zhu Yufu, China) and Democratic Reps. James McGovern (Raif Badawi, Saudi Arabia, and Nabeel Rajab, Bahrain), Sheila Jackson Lee (Ta Phong Tan, Vietnam), and Alan Lowenthal (Nguyen Cong Chinh, Vietnam) – share their experiences, and deliver written statements from the POCs explaining how the advocacy 'meant that their unjust imprisonment had not been forgotten' or 'continues to give them hope that one day they will be released'. Also, panel features Amnesty International Senior Program Officer Andrew Fandino, U.S. Vice Chair on International Religious Freedom Commissioner Kristina Arriaga, Freedom Now DC Director Melina Milazzo, Reporters Without Borders North American Director Margaux Ewen, and Freedom House Advocacy Manager Annie Boyajian Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2255, Washington, DC <http://tlhrc.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/TLHRCcommission>

2:30 PM House Natural Resources subcommittee legislative hearing – Federal Lands Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'H.R. 2591, Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund for Tomorrow's Needs Act of 2017', 'H.R. 4429, Cormorant Control Act', 'H.R. 4609, West Fork Fire Station Act of 2017', 'H.R. 4647, Recovering America's Wildlife Act', and 'H.R. 4851, Kennedy-King Establishment Act of 2018' Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

**Other:** 11:00 AM Heritage Foundation discussion on 'What is the International Reach of American Law in the Digital Age? – 'Sovereignty in Cyberspace: What is the International Reach of American Law in the Digital Age?' Heritage Foundation discussion, with Republican Reps. Doug Collins and Warren Davidson, former Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, and Heritage Foundation Visiting Fellow in Technology, Cyber, and Science Policy Klon Kitchen Location: Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Ave NE, Washington, DC [www.heritage.org](http://www.heritage.org) <https://twitter.com/Heritage>

2:00 PM Dem Sen. Christopher Coons speaks at ACS and CDT panel discussion on the Microsoft-Ireland case – Democratic Sen. Christopher Coons provides closing remarks at a panel discussion hosted by the American Constitution Society and the Center for Democracy and Technology, titled 'The Microsoft-Ireland Case: Do U.S. Warrants Work In Foreign Lands?' Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC [www.acslaw.org](http://www.acslaw.org) <https://twitter.com/acslaw>

3:30 PM Mayors participate in press call on the Trump administration's infrastructure plan – Democratic National Committee holds a press call with mayor to discuss the Trump administration's infrastructure plan. Participating mayors are Michael Hancock (Denver), Eric

Garcetti (Los Angeles), Bob Buckhorn (Tampa, FL), Nan Whaley (Dayton, OH), and William Peduto (Pittsburgh, PA) Location: Los Angeles Denver Tampa Dayton Pittsburgh  
<http://www.democrats.org/> <https://twitter.com/TheDemocrats>

6:30 PM National Press Foundation Annual Awards Dinner – National Press Foundation Annual Awards Dinner, with honorees including Clarence Page (Chicago Tribune), Bret Baier (Fox News Channel), Nicole Carroll (Arizona Republic), Samuel Granados, Zoeann Murphy, Kevin Schaul, Anthony Faiola, Justin Jouvenal, Michael Miller, Dan Morse and Sally Jenkins (Washington Post), Tony Bartelme (Post and Courier), James Grimaldi and Michelle Hackman (Wall Street Journal), and Kevin Kallaugher (The Baltimore Sun and The Economist) Location: National Press Foundation, 1211 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.nationalpress.org/> <https://twitter.com/NatPress>

AG Sessions addresses Major County Sheriffs of America – 20th Anniversary Major County Sheriffs of America Winter Conference, 'Leading The Way For A Safer America'. Final day includes remarks from Attorney General Jeff Sessions, on violent crime and opioids (10:05 AM EST) Location: JW Marriott Washington, DC, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.mcsheriffs.com](http://www.mcsheriffs.com)

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

*Jimmy Kimmel:* "White House Chief of Staff John Kelly might be out of a job soon. President Trump is deciding whether to replace him because of the way he handled the spouse abuse allegations against Rob Porter. Sarah Huckabee Sanders told the reporters the President has confidence in his chief of staff, which means he's definitely fired."

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**To:** [Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com](mailto:Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com)  
**Subject:** U S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, February 20, 2018  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 20, 2018 6:03:35 AM

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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### DOI In The News

- Associated Press: It's Been A Year Of Turmoil For Ryan Zinke's Interior Department.
- Associated Press: Zinke Plans Huge Overhaul For Interior; Jobs Would Move West.
- Huffington Post: Ex-Interior Chief Sally Jewell: I Didn't Even Know I Had A Special Flag.
- The Hill: Trump, Pence To Address CPAC This Week.
- Reuters: U.S. Sets Largest Offshore Oil, Gas Lease Auction For March.
- The Hill: Interior Plan To Use Drilling Funds For New Projects Met With Skepticism.
- Reuters: U.S. Seeks To Boost Output Of 35 Minerals, Reduce Import Reliance.

### **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

- Tribal Leaders: Infrastructure Bill Should Include Indian Country Priorities.
- He Was One Of The First. Now, The Last: A Navajo Code Talker Remembers Iwo Jima.
- New Exhibit Examines Native American Imagery In US Culture.
- MGM Files 'Provisional' Memorandum Siding With Interior In Third-Casino Lawsuit.

### **Bureau Of Indian Education**

- Program Helps Native American Students Get Ready For College.

### **Bureau Of Land Management**

- Outdoor Life Magazine: Secretary Zinke's Order On Big-Game Migration Zones Follows Sportsmen-Backed Science.
- Craig (CO) Daily Press: BLM Revising Methane Waste Prevention Rule.
- Associated Press: Demand For Permits To Hike The Wave Only Increasing.
- Albuquerque (NM) Journal: Ranch Manager Addresses Wild Horse Problem.

### **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

- Public Meeting On Offshore Drilling Is Set For Wednesday.
- Gov. Deal Wants Study Of Offshore Drilling 'Pros And Cons.'
- Relax, Florida: Interior Dept. Announcement Isn't Opening Up Our Shores To Oil Drilling.
- Public Lands Commissioner Decries Offshore Drilling Process.
- N.C. Threatens Offshore Drilling Lawsuit.
- RI Leaders Oppose Coastal Oil Drilling.

### **Fish And Wildlife Service**

- New York Times: Animals Are Losing Their Vagility, Or Ability To Roam Freely.
- Williamsport (PA) Sun-Gazette: "Always A Chance:" Feds Declare Eastern Cougar Extinct In Pennsylvania.
- Chicago Tribune: Midwest Scientists Help Endangered Mexican Wolf Population.
- Ruidoso (NM) News: Environmentalists Fear Lynx May Lose Protection Under The ESA.

### **National Park Service**

- Los Angeles Times: National Forests Will Be Fee-Free On Presidents Day And On These Upcoming Dates.
- Missoulian (MT): Flyover Shows Sperry Chalet Dormitory Walls Still Standing.
- Washington Post: At Denali National Park, Winter Means Paws On Patrol.
- Bloomberg News: Denali National Park Welcomes Its First (and Last) Luxury Hotel.
- San Francisco Chronicle: Yosemite Sets June Reopening For Mariposa Grove After Years Of Renovations.
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## DOI In The News

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### It's Been A Year Of Turmoil For Ryan Zinke's Interior Department.

The [AP](#) (2/19, Brown) reports that the Interior Department in the past year "has seen dozens of senior staff members reassigned and key leadership positions left unfilled, rules considered burdensome to industry shelved, and a sweeping reorganization proposed for its 70,000 employees." The "evolving status quo" at the agency has been praised by energy companies and Republicans, and Secretary Zinke has "emerged as the point person" for the Trump Administration's goal of American "energy dominance." However, Democrats, conservationists, and some agency employees say Zinke "has curbed outside input into how the land is used and elevated corporate interests above the duty to safeguard treasured sites." Additionally, eleven leadership positions remain vacant a year after President Trump took office, "including the directors of the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service."

### Zinke Plans Huge Overhaul For Interior; Jobs Would Move West.

The [AP](#) (2/17, Elliott) reported Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is moving forward with a "massive overhaul of his department, despite growing opposition to his proposal to move hundreds of public employees out of Washington and create a new organizational map that largely ignores state boundaries." Zinke's goal is to "divide most of the department's 70,000 employees and their responsibilities into 13 regions based on rivers and ecosystems, instead of the current map based mostly on state lines." The headquarters of several major bureaus would also move to the West. According to the AP, the proposal would "get top officials closer to the natural resources and cultural sites they manage." The plan is getting push-back from Congressional Democrats and a bipartisan group of Western governors, who have complained that Zinke "shut them out of the planning for the reorganization."

### Ex-Interior Chief Sally Jewell: I Didn't Even Know I Had A Special Flag.

The [Huffington Post](#) (2/19, D'Angelo) reports former Interior Secretary Sally Jewell says she first heard about "her own special flag at the agency when her successor started flying it over the department's Washington, D.C. headquarters." Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "revived an obscure military flag-flying tradition" in which, when he enters the building, a "security staffer takes the elevator to the seventh floor, climbs the stairs to the roof and hoists a special secretarial flag." Jewell told the HuffPost, "I had no idea there was a secretarial flag. And if I had known there was a flag the last thing I would have done was to ever fly it."

[The Hill](#) (2/19, Zanona) reports an Interior spokeswoman told The Washington Post in October that the raising of the flag is "a major sign of transparency." She said then, "Ryan Zinke is proud and honored to lead the Department of the Interior, and is restoring honor and tradition to the department, whether it's flying the flag when he is in garrison or restoring traditional access to public lands."

### **Trump, Pence To Address CPAC This Week.**

[The Hill](#) (2/19, Zanona) reported that President Trump will speak at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) on Friday. In addition, "Vice President Mike Pence, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, Energy Secretary Rick Perry, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Fox News host Sean Hannity are also slated to speak this week at" CPAC, "which kicks off Wednesday at the National Harbor complex in Maryland."

### **U.S. Sets Largest Offshore Oil, Gas Lease Auction For March.**

[Reuters](#) (2/16, Gardner) reported the Interior Department announced on Friday "it would offer the largest oil and gas offshore auction in U.S. history on March 21 for areas in federal waters off the Gulf Coast, less than a year after a similar sale yielded little corporate interest." The auction is expected to cover "77.3 million acres (31.3 mln hectares) offshore Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida for oil and gas development" with blocks "from 3 to 231 miles (5 to 372 km) offshore and in waters 9 to 11,115 feet (3 to 3,390 meters) deep." A similar auction in August 2017 "got a tepid response from oil companies."

[The Hill](#) (2/16, Green) reported Deputy Interior Secretary David Bernhardt said, "Responsibly developing our offshore energy resources is a major pillar of President Trump's American Energy Dominance strategy. ... A strong offshore energy program supports tens of thousands good paying jobs and provides the affordable and reliable energy we need to heat homes, fuel our cars, and power our economy."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/16, Siegel) reported the sale is "part of the National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017-2022, a five-year program whose terms were established by the Obama administration." The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management "estimates that offshore resources in the Gulf contain more than 48 billion barrels of oil and 141 trillion cubic feet of natural gas."

The [Lafayette \(LA\) Daily Advertiser](#) (2/16) reported the lease sale terms "include stipulations to protect biologically sensitive resources, mitigate potential adverse effects on protected species, and avoid potential conflicts associated with oil and gas development in the region."

The [Bradenton \(FL\) Herald](#) (2/16, Callihan) reported the Gulf Coast of the US "is being sold off for offshore drilling exploration." Florida Gov. Rick Scott maintained that the pending sale "will not affect Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's agreement in January not to expand offshore Florida drilling."

### **Interior Plan To Use Drilling Funds For New Projects Met With Skepticism.**

[The Hill](#) (2/18, Green) reported that a Department of Interior plan to construct roads in national parks, fix visitor centers and complete other infrastructure projects using money raised by drilling on public lands is "facing skepticism from members of Congress and a former senior department official." The plan would forgo traditional funding and finance up to \$18 billion in "backlogged" infrastructure projects "solely through the sale of mineral and fossil fuel extraction on public lands and waters." The proposal, supported by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, "faces several key hurdles, leaving even Republican members of Congress questioning its feasibility and raising a number of concerns, including whether the drilling money is already spoken for by other agencies."

### **U.S. Seeks To Boost Output Of 35 Minerals, Reduce Import Reliance.**

[Reuters](#) (2/16, Taylor) reported that the Interior Department said on Friday that the United States "should boost domestic production of 35 critical minerals including uranium, cobalt and lithium, to reduce its reliance on foreign suppliers." The announcement of "35 critical materials used in basic manufacturing, batteries and electronics" was the department's initial step "to carry out a December presidential order to break US dependence on foreign minerals." Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science Tim Petty is quoted saying, "Any shortage of these resources constitutes a strategic vulnerability for the security and prosperity of the United States."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/16, Siciliano) reported minerals deemed “critical” to the US include “highly prized metals such as aluminum, the platinum group of metals used for catalytic agents, and rare-earth elements that are used in batteries and such high-tech devices as smartphones and missile guidance systems.” The US Geologic Survey compiled the list, which will be available for comment by industry and the public until March 19. The National Mining Association said on Friday that the list is not extensive enough.

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Tribal Leaders: Infrastructure Bill Should Include Indian Country Priorities.**

[NPR](#) (2/17, Clair) reported Native Americans are pushing to have their voices heard on President Trump’s proposed infrastructure plan. President Jefferson Keel of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) recently told the annual gathering of tribal leaders that, “in 2018, no infrastructure bill should pass unless it includes Indian Country’s priorities.” Keel argues that a 2018 infrastructure bill should ensure that “all communities — including native communities — have the framework needed to succeed.” He told NPR on Thursday, “It’s not that we disagree with his priorities. We just want to be included in any of those plans for development of plans or policies that affect Indian Country in a way that we can not only protect our lands, but we can improve the relationship.” At the same NCAI meeting, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke told the Executive Winter Council he was a “champion of all Indian Nations,” and supports Keel’s push to allow tribes to make their own decisions about how their land is used.

### **He Was One Of The First. Now, The Last: A Navajo Code Talker Remembers Iwo Jima.**

The [San Diego Union-Tribune](#) (2/17, Prine) reported on Thomas Begay, who at 92 is believed to be one of the last surviving Navajo code talkers. By the time he “splashed ashore” onto Iwo Jima with the 27th Marines, “his regiment already had lost two code talkers and he figured his odds were good to be next.” Begay said, “I didn’t want to join the code talkers! I signed up for aerial gunnery school.” However, he was a “natural” who was “smart enough to learn a 20 code primer the sergeant made him memorize the first day but also highly immersed in Navajo language and culture.”

### **New Exhibit Examines Native American Imagery In US Culture.**

The [AP](#) (2/19, Fonseca) reports on a “provocative” new exhibit that opened last month at the National Museum of the American Indian. The exhibit “pushes the national debate over American Indian imagery – including men in headdresses with bows, arrows and tomahawks – and sports teams named the Chiefs, Braves and Blackhawks.” The exhibit contains dozens of clips that “expand on how the imagery has permeated American culture in television and film.” Despite the “historic or cartoonish” images, Julie Reed, a history professor at the University of Tennessee, said that many people are unable to imagine American Indians in the modern world.

### **MGM Files ‘Provisional’ Memorandum Siding With Interior In Third-Casino Lawsuit.**

The [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (2/19, Hallenbeck) reports that on Monday, MGM submitted a “provisional memorandum” stating that it “supports the U.S. Department of the Interior’s claim that a lawsuit seeking to compel the department to act on gaming amendments between the state and the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes is flawed because the Mashantuckets never signed a so-called ‘compact’ with the state.” MGM’s attorneys wrote that the memorandum will only be filed “if the Court subsequently grants MGM’s pending motion for leave to intervene or permits MGM to participate as amicus curiae (friend of the court).”

## **Bureau Of Indian Education**

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### **Program Helps Native American Students Get Ready For College.**

The [AP](#) (2/17, Armijo) reported on the American Indian Measurable Success Initiative, a “broad partnership among tribes, school districts and state programs and agencies” which strives to “dramatically increase college readiness, attainment and success of Native American students in higher education programs.” In 2016-17, AIMS administrators “noticed 46 Native American students from high schools in southwest Colorado had been accepted to college, but only 26 actually enrolled in a college.” The following year, AIMS counselors “reached out to Native

American students who had been accepted to college to increase the enrollment rate." AIMS has also helped boost the number of local Native American high school students taking AP or concurrent college enrollment from three in 2015-16 to 75 in 2018-19.

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Secretary Zinke's Order On Big-Game Migration Zones Follows Sportsmen-Backed Science.**

[Outdoor Life Magazine](#) (2/16, Long) reported scientists are demonstrating that "healthy migration corridors are key for healthy big-game herds and robust hunting seasons." University of Wyoming associate professor Matthew Kauffman said, "This really is a science-based initiative." According to the article, biologists have "documented that some western big-game species commonly migrate 150 to 200 miles over the course of just one spring or fall season." Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke earlier this month "issued an order that western land managers such as the Bureau of Land Management and the National Wildlife Refuge system, use migration-data to help inform land management decisions and seek partnerships with locals to conserve these habitats."

### **BLM Revising Methane Waste Prevention Rule.**

The [Craig \(CO\) Daily Press](#) (2/18, Press) reported the Bureau of Land Management plans to revise a 2016 rule regulating venting and flaring of waste methane in oil and gas production. Specifically, the proposed rule "would eliminate duplicate regulatory requirements and re-establish long-standing requirements the 2016 final rule sought to replace." Joe Balash, assistant secretary for Land and Minerals Management, said, "In order to achieve energy dominance through responsible energy production, we need smart regulations not punitive regulations. We believe this proposed rule strikes that balance and will allow job growth in rural America." The proposal includes a 60-day public comment period.

### **Demand For Permits To Hike The Wave Only Increasing.**

The [AP](#) (2/17) reported demand for the 20 daily permits to hike The Wave, a "geological gem on the Arizona-Utah border," continues to rise. Over 160,000 people applied last year for the 7,300 yearly permits for the 3-mile hike. The number of applicants jumped 20 percent last year, up from 87,000 in 2013. The Bureau of Land Management issues half the permits in a monthly online lottery and half through daily drawings at its office in Kanab. BLM began requiring permits "in the late 1980s in order to comply with the Wilderness Act, which limits visitation to protected areas."

### **Ranch Manager Addresses Wild Horse Problem.**

The [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/19, Goldstein) reports that there is a "problem with wild horse overpopulation in New Mexico, as well as all of the arid West." The Bureau of Land Management spends \$80 million annually to capture and care for wild horses. Roch Hard, a third-generation New Mexican, "worries that the public won't get involved until the more inhumane options of mass roundups and euthanasia become visible and routine." Hart's company, Wildlife Protection Management, invented a "feeding station for wild horses that facilitates remote injection of contraceptives."

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Public Meeting On Offshore Drilling Is Set For Wednesday.**

The [AP](#) (2/19) reports that on Wednesday the Trump Administration will "hold its only scheduled public meeting in Virginia on offshore drilling." The Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is holding the meeting, where officials "will be available to answer the public's questions," according to the Daily Press.

### **Gov. Deal Wants Study Of Offshore Drilling 'Pros And Cons.'**

The [AP](#) (2/16) reported Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal (R) announced on Friday "he won't take a position on President Donald Trump's plan to allow oil drilling off the Georgia coast until a state agency studies the 'pros and cons.'" In an interview with WTOG-TV, Deal said, "I would prefer to have the facts and I look forward to receiving the recommendations from our Department of

Natural Resources. ... Their environmental divisions are very sensitive to these issues and I feel sure they will do an in-depth study of what the pros and cons would be if we were to have offshore drilling off the coast of the state of Georgia." [WTOC-TV](#) Savannah, GA (2/16, Gazaway) described Deal's statements as "the first time the governor has gone on the record when it comes to offshore drilling." The study is expected to begin shortly, but was unknown as to "how long it will take."

### **Relax, Florida: Interior Dept. Announcement Isn't Opening Up Our Shores To Oil Drilling.**

The [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (2/16, Leary) reported the Interior Department late Friday afternoon "announced a major sale of oil lease locations in the Gulf of Mexico, but it would put rigs no closer to Florida." A spokesman for Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) is quoted saying, "Our office has spoken with the Department of Interior. They have confirmed that their press release does not affect Secretary (Ryan) Zinke's commitment to not expand offshore oil drilling off Florida's coast."

*Clearwater Says 'No' To Drilling.* The [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Newspapers](#) (2/16, Mosby) reported that, after the Trump Administration's decision to allow new offshore drilling in coastal waters, there has been increased state and local opposition to offshore drilling in Florida. Gov. Scott has issued a statement against drilling due to concerns for the state's tourism, and opposition to the move "has trickled down to the local county and municipality levels, as well." For example, Clearwater City Council members have "unanimously approved a resolution against offshore oil drilling and exploration, citing threats to tourism, the fishing industry and the environment."

### **Public Lands Commissioner Decries Offshore Drilling Process.**

The [AP](#) (2/16) reported Washington Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz raised concerns about the proposed offshore drilling plan on Thursday in a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and BOEM Acting Director Walter Cruickshank. Franz said, "[t]he people of Washington State did not ask for offshore drilling and do not want offshore drilling. ... Our public lands and waters belong to all of us. They are not assets to be plundered, leaving Washingtonians with the mess." Franz believes offshore drilling in the state "could negatively impact the coastal environment as well as local fishing and shellfish industries."

### **N.C. Threatens Offshore Drilling Lawsuit.**

The [New Bern \(NC\) Sun Journal](#) (2/18, Wagner) reported that as North Carolina's "scheduled opportunity to weigh in on offshore drilling draws closer," state Gov. Roy Cooper (D) and attorney general Josh Stein (D) are continuing to stand in opposition to the Trump Administration's offshore drilling plan. Stein has organized a group of 12 state that are ready to bring a lawsuit if the plan is not changed. Last week, Stein said in an interview, "We are engaged with the Department of the Interior and Secretary (Ryan) Zinke to make the case that North Carolina depends on tourism and that our state and local officials believe that this is going to hurt North Carolina so that North Carolina is not ultimately in the final plan."

### **RI Leaders Oppose Coastal Oil Drilling.**

The [Narragansett \(RI\) Times](#) (2/16, Cozzolino) reported that on Monday, Gov. Gina Raimondo (D-RI) and the state's congressional delegation said that proposed coast oil drilling would not happen off the coast of Rhode Island. Speaking at an event on Monday, Raimondo said she wants "to send a loud and clear message to the Trump administration that we will not allow offshore drilling off our coasts. ... We ought to be moving forward to offshore wind farms, not backward to offshore oil drilling." The proposal, "which came from United States Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, would open up 90 percent of the total National Outer Continental Shelf acreage and more than 98 percent of 'undiscovered, technically recoverable oil and gas resources in federal offshore areas' to oil and gas drilling leases." Zinke and the Interior Department "have said the proposal would help establish America's 'energy dominance' and that the plan would 'provide billions of dollars to fund the conservation of our coastlines, public lands and parks.'"

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Animals Are Losing Their Vigility, Or Ability To Roam Freely.**

A 1,200-word [New York Times](#) (2/19, D3, Robbins) analysis highlights biologists' concern that human development will adversely impact animals' ability to roam freely. The Times cites a "global study of 57 species of mammals, published in the journal Science," that "found that

wildlife move far less in landscapes that have been altered by humans." The Times says "it's clear that the protection of these critical corridors is lagging," noting that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "just announced a new effort to account for long-distance migrations that cross federal lands." Zinke said, "We all know that animals go where animals want to go, and more often than not that's dependent upon natural features like watersheds." Accordingly, Zinke "signed an order to foster cooperation on migrations," saying he will be "working with ranchers to modify their fences, working with states to collaborate on sage brush restoration, or working with scientists to better understand migration routes."

### **"Always A Chance:" Feds Declare Eastern Cougar Extinct In Pennsylvania.**

The [Williamsport \(PA\) Sun-Gazette](#) (2/19, Nolan) reports the FWS declared the Eastern Cougar extinct in Pennsylvania, despite reported cougar sightings in the state. The FWS said subspecies of the mammal "have been eliminated from about two-thirds of their original range." The Sun-Gazette focuses on the state Game Commission's investigations into reported cougar sightings, despite the commission's awareness of "the limited chance of seeing a cougar in Pennsylvania."

The [Harrisburg \(PA\) Patriot-News](#) (2/19, Schneck) emphasizes how "no reports of black panthers have been confirmed in Pennsylvania," despite sightings continuing to be reported.

### **Midwest Scientists Help Endangered Mexican Wolf Population.**

Relying on information in the [Chicago Tribune](#) (2/12, Olumhense), the [AP](#) (2/18) reports on the work of the "Chicago Zoological Society and a team assembled by the...St. Louis Zoo" to use "artificial insemination in an effort to improve the genetic diversity of the Mexican wolf population." The AP notes that "the wolves have been endangered since 1976, when only seven were left in the wild." The Chicago Zoological Society has "partnered with the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since 2003."

### **Environmentalists Fear Lynx May Lose Protection Under The ESA.**

The [Ruidoso \(NM\) News](#) (2/16, Stallings) reported that last month, FWS officials "announced the completion of a scientific review of the Canada lynx in the contiguous United States that concludes the secretive feline may no longer warrant protection under the Endangered Species Act and should be considered for delisting, because of its recovery." Service officials stated, "Although climate change remains an important factor for the conservation of the Canada lynx, neither the service nor the experts we consulted conclude that the lynx is at risk of extinction from climate change within the foreseeable future."

## **National Park Service**

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### **National Forests Will Be Fee-Free On Presidents Day And On These Upcoming Dates.**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/16, Forgione) reported that in honor of Presidents' Day, public lands waived fees for visitors. In addition, the US Forest Service "will waive fees on June 9 for National Get Outdoors Day, Sept. 22 for National Public Lands Day and Nov. 11 for Veterans Day." The BLM, FWS, and the Bureau of Reclamation also made their parks free for visitors on Monday, but not all national parks had planned to follow suit. The Times added that "national parks will offer free admission only on April 21, the first day of National Park Week; Sept. 22, National Public Lands Day; and Nov. 11, Veterans Day," as well as Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

The [AP](#) (2/19) paraphrases US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Regional Forester Jim Peña as saying "he hopes the fee-free day encourages new and repeat visitors to come out and enjoy their national forests."

### **Flyover Shows Sperry Chalet Dormitory Walls Still Standing.**

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/16, Backus) said that a "significant stabilization effort" by the US Park Service "last fall to protect the charred walls of the Sperry Chalet dormitory building" in Glacier Park "is holding up well." The building was "guttled Aug. 31 when the Sprague Fire roared through the area," but "a recent flyover showed the walls appeared to be in good condition." The Missoulian noted that "in October, a 10-person U.S. Park Service crew fought freezing temperatures, rain and snow over a two-week period to brace the rock walls, sandwich the gables and surround the chimney with collars of wood to protect the more than century-old building from wind and snow." The Missoulian quoted Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke as tweeting in November, "We're going to rebuild @GlacierNPS Sperry Chalet better to last the next 100 years."



The [Missoula Current \(MT\)](#) (2/17, Devlin) reported that the rebuilding of the Chalet “will begin with a public open house on Feb. 28,” which “will launch the schematic design process for [its] reconstruction.” Zinke said in a statement released Friday, “Rebuilding historic Sperry is a priority. I’m excited the work is moving along. The Conservancy and the park put in a lot of work to stabilize the building for winter, and now we can start to rebuild for future family adventures at Sperry.”

The [National Parks Traveler](#) (2/19) quotes Glacier Superintendent Jeff Mow as saying, “We’re excited to kick off our schematic design process for the Sperry Chalet rebuild. This is the first of several opportunities for the public to engage and comment and we hope it will be informative to our selected architects as they engage in the design process. Come and tell us your Sperry Chalet story.”

[KPAX-TV](#) Missoula, MT (2/19) reports online that the first part of the schematic design process “will feature a conversation about the park’s chalets, their national historic significance, and the Great Northern Railroad’s influence on tourism and park infrastructure, still in evidence today, with Park Museum Curator Deirdre Shaw.” The park also said it plans to “post a newsletter on the National Park Service Planning Website describing preliminary rebuilding concepts with an opportunity for public comment either online or via written letter.”

### **At Denali National Park, Winter Means Paws On Patrol.**

In a “KidsPost” piece in its Lifestyle section, the [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Jazynka) highlighted the employment of 31 “enthusiastic” Alaskan huskies to pull sleds at Alaska’s Denali National Park and Preserve. The Post emphasized the benefits of the dogs’ work, adding that “in the summer, the human and canine rangers work as ambassadors, educating the public about sled dogs’ important role in Denali dating back to 1922.”

### **Denali National Park Welcomes Its First (and Last) Luxury Hotel.**

In a 1,200-word profile of Denali National Park’s first luxury hotel, the Sheldon Chalet, [Bloomberg News](#) (2/16, Ekstein) praised the work of developer Robert Sheldon. The profile emphasized opinion that “the 50 years of family history...make Sheldon Chalet so special for Alaska.” Bloomberg explained how the “Sheldons earned commercial rights in such a protected place.” Bloomberg added that the “Sheldons want the property to be carbon-neutral and believe they’re close to accomplishing this, thanks to generous solar panels and a runoff-powered water supply.”

### **Yosemite Sets June Reopening For Mariposa Grove After Years Of Renovations.**

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/16, Disbrow) reported Yosemite set its reopening for Mariposa Grove for June, after years of renovations. Work on the site began in July 2015, and “the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias will fully reopen to the public on June 15, nearly three years after restoration work began.”

### **Mammoth Cave Guide Works To Fund Memorial For Ancestors.**

The [AP](#) (2/18, French) profiles Jerry Bransford, “a seasonal tour guide at Mammoth Cave National Park” in Kentucky, “who was pressured by his ancestors to see Mammoth Cave as slaves.” Bransford said “he wants to see a memorial constructed at his ancestors’ cemetery to honor their hard work and the contributions they made to the cave.” Bransford’s gofundme page has raised \$1,050.

### **National Park Chief To Retire.**

The [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#) (2/17, Wells) reported, “Josie Fernandez, the first female superintendent of Hot Springs National Park, announced Wednesday that she will retire at the end of March.” After 25 years with the NPS, “Fernandez said she looks forward to seeing the new energy” recruited to help with that task.

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Some 1,150 War Claims Filed So Far, Funding Remains Intact.**

The [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (2/18, Eugenio) reported that about 1,150 war claims have been received by the US government “ahead of the June 20 filing deadline and funding for paying war reparations this year remains intact despite the cuts due to the Trump tax law, according to the office of Delegate Madeleine Bordallo.” Adam Carbullido, deputy chief of staff for Bordallo, said,

"The GOP tax cuts will not impact the upcoming Section 30 payment later this year as it is tied to taxes received in 2017, before the tax law went into effect." The Interior's Office of Insular Affairs "also anticipates the same level as last year for Section 30 in its fiscal 2019 budget, Carbullido said."

### **Concerns In American Samoa At Storm Communication Links.**

[Radio New Zealand](#) (2/15) reported people in American Samoa say they "experienced a series of problems and emergency communications during Cyclone Gita." Neighboring Samoa also expressed concerns "about their problems with relaying emergency updates during what was at the time it swept through, a Category 2 storm." Monica Miller, Radio New Zealand's correspondent in Pago Pago, said, "They did not really prepare as normally there would be a lot of advice going out before a system arrives but that did not happen."

### **Northern Mariana Islands Look To Congress To Increase Domestic Workforce.**

[Pasquines \(PRI\)](#) (2/15, Aberastury) reported the US Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources discussed the proposed US Workforce Act during a hearing on February 9. The bill was "created to support local businesses and workers in the Marianas – as well as a reaction to the decrease of US workers on the islands." CNMI Delegate Gregorio Sablan told the committee that the bill would "spur us into getting a Northern Marianas economy that would have US workers as the main workforce. Third country nationals would come in to fill the gaps, where there are really no US workers." The bill would "require employers to get a foreign labor certification from the US Department of Labor before they even apply to work in the Marianas."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Trump's Budget Would Erase USGS Impact Research.**

[EnergyWire](#) (2/16, King) reported that a detailed breakdown of the Trump Administration's budget proposal "shows that the U.S. Geological Survey would receive no money for its environmental health mission area in fiscal 2019." This division is part of the agency's "broader energy and mineral resources mission area, which dodged cuts inflicted by a 20 percent reduction across the agency." Environmental health programs would also "disappear in favor of 'high priorities,'" according to the agency's budget justification. It would also eliminate \$21 million in funding and 119 full-time positions. However, the "other two arms of USGS's energy and mineral resources division – the mineral resources and energy resources programs – would receive a \$10 million and \$1 million bump, respectively."

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **The Public, Elected Officials Needs More Information On Secretary Zinke's Goals.**

In an editorial, the [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/17) said Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "is redesigning his department to move hundreds of public employees from Washington out West." The idea is good, but the Durango Herald said, "We are, however, skeptical about intent, because, as with the Bureau of Land Management (Herald, May 13) most of them are already there, and the most frequent challenges land management agencies face are political, philosophical and financial, not geographic." Zinke has released "few details of his proposal, so no one knows how he plans to implement it, but Western leaders, especially governors who Zinke did not consult (Herald, Feb. 14), are equally skeptical." The concept "could make sense with the right people and support, perhaps starting with a different Interior secretary who places a higher value on public comment, but potential problems are apparent."

### **Time To Move The Bureau Of Land Management West.**

Writing at the [Glenwood Springs \(CO\) Post Independent](#) (2/16, Tipton), Rep. Scott Tipton (R-CO) asked, "Why is the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) headquartered in Washington, when 99 percent of the more than 247.3 million acres of public land that the BLM manages is located in the West?" The BLM manages "vast amounts of land in the West for multiple uses, including grazing, mining, and recreation." Tipton said that he and Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO) are planning "to introduce legislation in the House and Senate to relocate the BLM. Our legislation would direct the Department of the Interior to submit a



strategy, including a proposed timeline, for relocating the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management from Washington, D.C. to one of 12 western states." It mandates "that the strategy must save the maximum amount of taxpayer money possible."

### **What Pocahontas's Heirs Need Isn't A New Reservation.**

Independent Women's Forum Senior Fellow and American Enterprise Institute Visiting Fellow Naomi Schaefer Riley wrote at the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Riley) that President Trump last month signed a bill that recognizes six Indian tribes in Virginia, allowing them to request new reservations. But allowing tribes to have reservations is not helpful to Indians – reservations are among some of the poorest places in the US and struggle with high crime rates and alcoholism. While these tribes have claimed they trace their lineage to Pocahontas, Riley noted that the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the Bush and Obama Administrations nonetheless refused to recognize these tribes because they could not produce sufficient paperwork.

### **Offshore Drilling: A Reckless Gamble Virginia Can't Afford.**

Natural Resources Defense Council President Rhea Suh writes at the [Richmond \(VA\) Times-Dispatch](#) (2/19, Suh) that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "said Florida's beaches are too important to be put at risk of the next BP-style disaster. And yet, he wants to expose Virginia waters and coastal communities to the hazards and harm of offshore oil and gas drilling." Virginians "should not be fooled. Rolling the dice on Virginia's rich coastal waters and all they support is a reckless gamble we can't afford." Zinke needs "to get that message loud and clear when the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management hosts a public meeting on the issue in Richmond on Feb. 21."

### **The Law That Protects Our Wild Birds Is Under Dire Threat.**

Writing at [Newsweek](#) (2/16, Yarnold), National Audubon Society President and CEO David Yarnold said the Trump Administration and some members of Congress "are ready to give oil and gas companies and other industries a free pass to kill birds with impunity by gutting" a bird protection law known as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. But the law "is more important now than ever. ... If the law is decapitated by the Interior Department and by legislative proposals authored by Wyoming GOP Rep. Liz Cheney, millions of our most iconic and beloved birds will be at huge risk."

### **Additional Reading.**

- [Newsday \(NY\): Drowning In A Swamp Of Dysfunction](#) (2/17).
- [Environmental Defense Fund: BLM Methane Rule Rollback Hurts Westerners, Helps No One](#) (2/16, Grossman).
- [Oklahoman: Legal Counsel: Government Leadership Roles Over Indian Gaming Remained Unfilled](#) (2/18, McBride).
- [Jefferson \(IN\) News & Tribune: CUMMINS: Try Finding A Wilderness](#) (2/17, Cummins).
- [Nation: Trump's Infrastructure Plan Is Great, Unless You Want Actually Functioning Infrastructure](#) (2/16, Chen).
- [KRWG-FM: Las Cruces City Councilors: Rollback Of Methane Rule Is An Insult To New Mexico And The Nation](#) Las Cruces, NM (2/17, Sorg, Vasequez, Flores).
- [Idaho Statesman: The People Who Help Protect Endangered Birds Of Prey](#) (2/16, Watson).

## **Top National News**

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### **Trump Expresses Support For Improving Gun Background Check System.**

In the wake of last week's deadly shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, the White House said Monday that the President supports improvements to the federal background check system for gun ownership. Media coverage of the White House announcement is heavy but also has a markedly pessimistic note, with many reports questioning whether any legislation will pass and citing past mass shooting incidents which resulted in no congressional action.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/19, Dawsey) reports that the President "signaled support" for legislation Sen. John Cornyn has introduced with Sen. Chris Murphy to "reinforc[e] the requirement that federal agencies report all criminal infractions to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and creating financial incentives for states to do so, as well." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/19, Bykowicz, Hughes) reports that Murphy said in a [tweet](#) that

Trump's support is "another sign the politics of gun violence are shifting rapidly," but he also said that "no one should pretend this bill alone is an adequate response to this epidemic."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/19, Boyer) reports that White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said Monday that the President spoke Friday with Cornyn about the legislation. Sanders said, "While discussions are ongoing and revisions are being considered, the president is supportive of efforts to improve the federal background check system." [Townhall](#) (2/19, Brown) says the legislation has support from the NRA, as well as "gun control groups including Everytown for Gun Safety and Moms Demand Action."

White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/19), "Right now, you have a bit of a patchwork in which local communities and states give information to, you know, one system. Our budget has an increase for 200 personnel to help staff that system. We want to make sure that the background check process is fully staffed, that all information gets in." Shah added, "Unstable, dangerous people who law enforcement and their own family members are flagging, as is the case here, should never have access to a deadly weapon of that sort, and we want to make sure we can do that in the proper way." However, Chip Reid said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/19, story 3, 2:10, Glor) that it is "not at all clear the bill would have prevented the Florida school shooter from buying his gun."

[The Hill](#) (2/19, Fabian, Savransky) highlights that the "measure is narrowly focused on background checks" and says it is "unclear whether the president would back more sweeping gun legislation," while [Bloomberg News](#) (2/19, Kapur, Jacobs) says the "carefully worded" statement from the White House "stops short of an endorsement of the proposal." Bloomberg also says Trump, who spent the holiday weekend at Mar-a-Lago, "has been speaking with people ranging from members of his resort to officials at the Broward County Sheriff's Department about the issue, according to two people familiar with the conversations who asked not to be identified." While Trump "is aware that tightening gun laws runs contrary to his party's preferences," these people said he "is open to having a conversation."

Jonathan Karl reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/19, story 2, 1:20, Muir) that Trump "has promised to take action, but has said nothing specific about what he would do," while [USA Today](#) (2/19, Jackson) says critics of the President "are skeptical about whether he will really push for anything," and on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/19, story 3, 2:10, Holt), Hallie Jackson said that "while President Trump might support this latest back ground check bill, his proposed budget actually cuts funding for states to improve their own background check reporting."

A [New York Times](#) (2/19, Rogers) headline describes Trump's support as "cautious" and the tone of its coverage is pessimistic that change will occur. The Times highlights Congress' "intransigence on gun legislation, including a failure last year to ban so-called bump stocks." The [AP](#) (2/19, Lucey, Danilova) says "previous gun tragedies have not produced action in Congress," and [Reuters](#) (2/19, Gardner) likewise says that other mass shootings "have also stirred outrage and calls for action to tighten US gun laws, with few results in Congress," while [Politico](#) (2/19, Nussbaum) highlights the "bipartisan outcry and calls to more stringently regulate bump stocks" after the Las Vegas shooting in October, but says "the effort went nowhere."

Other commentary was more optimistic. For example, Brit Hume was asked on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/19) if anything "change this time around" after other pushes for gun controls have been unsuccessful, Hume said, "It feels as if something might. Partly it's because the accumulation of these incidents in the public's reaction to them. Partly, I think it's that these young students who have come forward – you saw them yesterday on the Sunday shows they are planning a March next month, have been quite effective. There is a sense coupled with the fact that the President is now talking about doing something to strengthen the background check system and make it work a little better that we might get at least something this time around." Similarly, Anne Gearan of the Washington Post said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/19), "History suggests that there will be a moment here like there was with bump stocks and then it will go away. That said, I think this really does feel like there is a different current in the water."

**Students Protest Outside White House.** Jonathan Karl also reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/19, story 2, 1:20, Muir) that outside the White House Monday, a "group of students calling themselves Teens for Gun Reform, staged a protest." The [Washington Post](#) (2/19, Chason) says 17 students "lay down for three minutes in front of the White House...to represent the lives lost" in last week's shooting. The students "were joined by several hundred protesters who demanded that lawmakers act to end gun violence during an emotional demonstration on Presidents' Day." Gabe Gutierrez said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/19, story 2, 1:50, Holt) that students also protested Monday in California and New Jersey. Gutierrez added that 19 years after the Columbine massacre, the "student response to this latest rampage is dramatically different."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/19, story 2, 2:35, Glor) interviewed four Stoneman Douglas students who are among those “organizing marches on the Florida state capitol and on Washington.”

In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/19) lists the names of some victims of mass shootings in the US and expresses “solidarity with the students in Florida who are telling Mr. Trump and other politicians that they have had enough of their thoughts and prayers. They want action to keep weapons of war out of the wrong hands.”

**Teachers Face New Role As “Bodyguard And Protector.”** The [New York Times](#) (2/19, Turkewitz) reports that teachers “are grappling with how their roles have expanded, from educator and counselor to bodyguard and protector. They wonder if their classrooms are properly equipped, if they would recognize the signs of a dangerous student, and most of all, if they are prepared to jump in front of a bullet.” Teachers, the Times adds, are confronting “an excruciating reality – that teachers, who once seemed mostly removed from the life-or-death risks faced by the ranks of police officers and firefighters, might now be vulnerable.”

**Texas School District Permits Staff To Carry Guns.** The [Daily Caller](#) (2/19, Johnson) reports that the Argyle School Independent School District in Texas “decided in 2014 to allow highly trained members of staff to carry guns on campus to prevent mass shootings.” In an appearance on MSNBC this weekend, Argyle Sheriff Paul Cairney “described the process by which staff members can carry firearms in the school district.” Cairney “said the practice is heavily restricted, but the ‘time to do nothing is over’ when it comes to combating school shooters.” The DC describes the MSNBC as “flabbergasted at the practice.”

Joel B. Pollak, senior editor-at-large at Breitbart News, writes on [Breitbart](#) (2/19) that there is “one possibility” to prevent another tragedy, “but the left will not allow us to try it: namely, allowing teachers to carry guns.”

**Hewitt Calls For Congressional Hearings On School Shootings.** Hugh Hewitt writes in the [Washington Post](#) (2/19) that Trump’s “weekend tweetstorm didn’t precipitate the politicization of the massacre, but it did inflame it.” However, he “was far from the only person to seize on” the massacre “or to quickly assign blame beyond the killer.” Hewitt makes a case for congressional hearings on school shootings, arguing that they “could focus the country on the extent and origins of the sporadic outbreak of mass shootings, could distinguish between those born of ideology, mental instability or other sources, and comprehensively collect and assess proposals to address the awful eruptions, including whether the most effective ones should be passed at the state or federal level.” In addition, witnesses could “outline what the Second Amendment, as explained by the Supreme Court in two recent cases, means for legislative proposals.” Hewitt adds that both Education Secretary DeVos and Attorney General Sessions agreed with him that hearings should occur.

**WPost/ABC News Poll: Majorities Say Trump, Congress Not Doing Enough To Prevent Shootings.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/19, Clement, Guskina) reports that a new Washington Post/ABC News poll found that “more than 6 in 10 Americans fault Congress and President Trump for not doing enough to prevent mass shootings.” According to the poll, which was conducted after last week’s shooting, a “77 percent majority says Congress is not doing enough to prevent mass shootings and 62 percent say the same of Trump.”

**WPost Analysis: Shooting Gave White House Aides A Reprieve From Trump’s “Scandals.”** A front-page [Washington Post](#) (2/19, A1, Parker, Rucker) analysis says that last week’s shooting “seemed to shift the media glare away from the Trump scandals and gave embattled aides an opportunity to refocus on handling a rare crisis not of their own making.” The White House “mourned the loss of life,” but “some aides privately acknowledged that the tragedy offered a breather from the political storm.” Said a “White House official,” “For everyone, it was a distraction or a reprieve. ... A lot of people here felt like it was a reprieve from seven or eight days of just getting pummeled. ... But as we all know, sadly, when the coverage dies down a little bit, we’ll be back through the chaos.”

### **Trump To Hold Listening Session With Florida Students In Wake Of Shooting.**

Media coverage of last week’s deadly school shooting in Florida continues to be heavy. While a planned White House “listening session” with high school students garners some media attention, much of the coverage this morning focuses on criticism of President Trump’s response to the shooting from students who survived it, as well as comments from lawmakers about the possibility of passing bipartisan gun control legislation.

The [AP](#) (2/18) reports that in the wake of the shooting, Trump will hold a “listening session with high school students this week.” According to a White House schedule, Trump will “host

students and teachers Wednesday” and “meet with state and local officials on school safety on Thursday.” Reporting on the planned session, [The Hill](#) (2/18, Fabian) says high school students have been among “the most vocal advocates for new gun laws in response to last Wednesday’s shooting, which left 17 students and staff dead.”

***Students Blast Trump’s Response To School Shooting.*** In a separate story, the [AP](#) (2/18, Dearen, Spencer, Breed) reports that students who escaped the Florida school shooting “focused their anger Sunday” at Trump “contending that his response to the attack has been needlessly divisive.” Responding to a [tweet](#) Saturday in which Trump argued that Democrats had not passed any gun control measures when they controlled Congress, David Hogg, a 17-year-old student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, where the shooting occurred, said on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” “You’re the president. You’re supposed to bring this nation together, not divide us. ... How dare you.” Emma Gonzalez, who also survived the attack mentioned Trump, Sen. Marco Rubio, and Florida Gov. Rick Scott by name “in a warning to politicians who are supported by the National Rifle Association,” telling “Meet the Press,” “Now is the time to get on the right side of this, because this is not something that we are going to let sweep under the carpet.”

On CNN’s “State of the Union,” the [Washington Post](#) (2/18, Barrett) reports, Cameron Kasky, a junior at the school, said, “We are losing our lives while the adults are playing around. ... This is about us begging for our lives; this isn’t about the GOP, this isn’t about the Democrats, this is about us creating a badge of shame for any politicians accepting money from the NRA and using us as collateral.”

The [New York Post](#) (2/18, Jaeger) says the students “ripped into” Trump and told him to “have a damn heart.” Morgan Williams, a student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, [tweeted](#), “Oh my god. 17 OF MY CLASSMATES AND FRIENDS ARE GONE AND YOU HAVE THE AUDACITY TO MAKE THIS ABOUT RUSSIA???! HAVE A DAMN HEART. You can keep all of your fake and meaningless ‘thoughts and prayers.’”

[Reuters](#) (2/18, Johnson) reports that students “were mobilizing on Sunday for stronger gun laws.” Students from Douglas High School “joined others on social media to plan rallies, a Washington march and a national walk-out aimed at getting the attention of an adult population many say has failed to protect them.” The [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/18, story 2, 2:30, Quijano) reported that “teen survivors” have “announced a nationwide demonstration. It’s called ‘The March For Our Lives’ and will be held on March 24.” The [New York Times](#) (2/18, Burch, Madigan) reports that a “movement that has been building since the massacre last week,” as “grief-stricken teen survivors vowed to change the laws that allowed the gunman to get hold of an assault weapon and use it to slaughter his former classmates.” March organizers hope it “will attract students from across the country, and they say more protests are planned.” Victor Oquendo reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/18, story 2, 2:30, Llamas) that the student-led group Never Again is “planning a trip to Tallahassee to meet with state lawmakers face-to-face.”

In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (2/18), Christine Yared, a freshman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, recounts her experience during the shootings and writes, “We can’t let innocent people’s deaths be in vain. We need to work together beyond political parties to make sure this never happens again. We need tougher gun laws.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/18, Sullivan, Wan) says that while the students “have emerged since the shootings as a fearless and powerful political voice calling for stricter gun laws,” their “raging activism is also mixed with quiet personal pain.” As they “are trying to create a political force to challenge the National Rifle Association, they also are juggling funeral and burial schedules day after day.” On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/18, story 4, 2:00, Holt), Matt Bradley reported from a New Mexico high school where a shooting occurred last September “to look at the impact and how students are trying to move ahead.”

***White House Petition Urges Military Honors For JROTC Cadet Killed In Shooting.*** [Townhall](#) (2/18, Baumann) reports that a petition started Friday on the White House website calls on the President to give 15-year-old JROTC Cadet Peter Wang, who died in the shooting “a full honors military burial.” According to the petition, Wang, “was last seen, in uniform, holding doors open and thus allowing other students, teachers, and staff to flee to safety. Wang was killed in the process. His selfless and heroic actions have led to the survival of dozens in the area. Wang died a hero, and deserves to be treated as such, and deserves a full honors military burial.”

***Families Of Mass Shooting Victims Have Become An “Unwanted Fellowship.”*** The [New York Times](#) (2/18, Yee) reports that recent mass shootings and “the proliferation of grief from rural Oregon to the tip of Florida, have forced hundreds of family members into an unwanted fellowship.” Lonnie and Sandy Phillips, whose daughter was killed in the 2012 Colorado movie theater shooting, and others who have lost loved ones in mass shootings, “serve as guides in the

immediate aftermath, introducing the bereaved of Sandy Hook to those of San Bernardino and the parents of Virginia Tech to those of Roseburg, in a loose but growing network." The Times adds that while many families "want to struggle in quiet, if not quite in peace," and some "continue to support gun rights," a "large and growing number of families who want gun laws strengthened have chosen to seize the platform the media offers in the wake of a shooting and never to relinquish it."

### **NYTimes Analysis: ACA's Aid To Poor Stoking Middle-Class Resentment.**

In a 2,400-word piece, the [New York Times](#) (2/19, A1, Goodnough) examines "a tension at the heart of" the Affordable Care Act: while it "aims to provide health coverage for all, the law is far more generous to the poor and near poor than the middle class. By taking steps that hurt the individual insurance market," President Trump "has widened the gulf between people who pay full price for their coverage and those who get generous subsidies or free Medicaid." The Times says this has "deepened the resentment...among many who do not qualify for government assistance toward those who do."

### **Shuster: Bipartisan Infrastructure Plan Ready "Closer To Summer."**

[Breitbart](#) (2/19, Moran) reports House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee chairman Bill Shuster "suggested last week that President Donald Trump's promised infrastructure bill will be ready 'closer to summer.'" Said Shuster, "Peter DeFazio and I are working on a bill together. And based on our conversations at the White House yesterday, I think there's going to be an opportunity." Shuster's comments were originally reported by [Construction Equipment](#) (2/16) on Friday.

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

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### **New York Times.**

*"The Dirty Little Deals That Would Foul The Environment."* The [New York Times](#) (2/19) editorializes that "environmentally inclined Senate Democrats" should prevent Republican lawmakers from inserting several "riders" with potentially dire consequences for the environment into an omnibus spending measure. These riders include one that would kill a 2015 "rule intended to clarify and broaden protections for smaller streams and wetlands," two that would kill "rules to minimize emissions of methane," two "that would deny endangered species protections to a Western bird called the sage grouse," and several targeting wildlife in Alaska. The Times concludes that "Mr. Schumer and his fellow Democrats cannot bargain away the environment."

### **Washington Post.**

*"The Lives We've Lost In Mass Shootings – Again."* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/19) lists the names of some victims of mass shootings in the US and expresses "solidarity with the students in Florida who are telling Mr. Trump and other politicians that they have had enough of their thoughts and prayers. They want action to keep weapons of war out of the wrong hands."

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*"How To Punish American Workers."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/19) says in an editorial that steel and aluminum tariffs that President Trump has been mulling since he took office would actually cost American jobs, since tariffs would increase prices for industries that consume the materials. These industries employ far more Americans than work in steel production, and job cuts would likely follow. The Journal says that retaliatory trade barriers could also hurt American exporters.

*"Romney's Russia Vindication."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/19) editorializes that Mitt Romney, who announced Friday that he's running for the US Senate from Utah, claimed that Russia was a major threat to the US in the third presidential debate in 2012. The Journal argues that Romney was right in 2012.

*"Elon Musk Impresses China."* In a brief editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/19) lauds SpaceX's recent Falcon Heavy rocket launch, noting that Chinese state media has expressed concern about China being so far behind in space technology. The Journal says that the US continues to lead the world in ingenuity, due in large part to America's welcoming of global talent.

## **Big Picture**

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## Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Facebook Battles New Criticism After Indictment Against Russians](#)  
[Trump Backs Effort To Improve Background Checks For Guns](#)  
[Washington's \\$500 Million Financial-Storm Forecaster Is Foundering](#)  
[Iranian Airline Bought US Jet Parts Through Front Firms](#)

### **New York Times:**

[Russian Bots Moved Quickly To Exploit The Florida Shooting](#)  
[School Shootings Put Teachers In New Role As Human Shields](#)  
[Graft And Crooked Deals Fuel Ukraine's New War Machine](#)  
[State Officials Say They Are Told Too Little About Election Threats](#)  
[Were Arrests Made To Solve Crimes, Or To Get Extra Pay?](#)  
[As Some Got Free Health Care, Gwen Got Squeezed: An Obamacare Dilemma](#)

### **Washington Post:**

[Is Anyone Listening?](#)  
[Fresh Push For Gun Control](#)  
[For White House, A Chance To Regroup](#)  
[Public Faults Congress And Trump In Shootings](#)  
[In Europe, Revisionist History Is Taking Shape](#)

### **Financial Times:**

[Angela Merkel Brings Saarland Premier Into Succession Race](#)  
[Latvia ECB Member Faces Calls To Quit After Bribery Accusations](#)  
[Trump Backs Better System Of Background Checks After Shooting](#)  
[KFC Runs Out Of Chicken In Logistics Fiasco](#)

### **Washington Times:**

[Trump Supports Improving Federal Background Checks On Gun Owners](#)  
[Supreme Court To Decide Whether Mandatory Union Dues Violate First Amendment Rights](#)  
[Ex-Redskin Champions Tackle Football Ban For Kids To Combat Concussions](#)  
[Jill Stein, Bernie Sanders Under Fire As Russian Indictments Reopen Old Wounds For Democrats](#)  
[Mueller Threatening New Charges Against Paul Manafort In Bid To Deplete 'Resources,' Attorney Says](#)  
[Evangelicals' Newfound Political Clout In Latin America Unnerves Politicians, Catholic Church](#)

### **Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-WH; Russia Probe-WH; Severe Weather; Cruise Line Brawl; Uber Eats Driver Murder; Trump-Oprah; Winter Olympics; NBA News; Postal Worker Killed; Autism Research; Cougar Sighting; Box Office News.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-Student Protest; Florida School Shooting-WH; Trump-Oprah; Russia Probe; Severe Weather; Winter Olympics; Russia-US Cyber Meddling; Facebook-Account Authentication; KFC-No Chicken; Indonesia Volcano; Cruise Line Brawl; NBA News; Box Office News.

**NBC:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-Student Protest; Florida School Shooting-WH; Russia Probe-WH; Russia Probe-Russian Indictment; Severe Weather; Winter Olympics; Winter Olympics-Bobsledder; Tax Refund Fraud; Cruise Line Brawl; Box Office News; Mister Roger; Athlete Assistants.

### **Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida School Shooting – 19 minutes, 10 seconds  
Russia Probe – 5 minutes, 50 seconds  
Winter Olympics – 3 minutes, 55 seconds  
Severe Weather – 1 minutes, 40 seconds

### **Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting; Trump-Romney Endorsement; Winter Olympics.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Trump-Romney Endorsement; Winter Olympics; California Wildfires; Severe Weather.

**FOX:** Florida School Shooting; Pennsylvania Gerrymandering Ruling; Severe Weather; Wall Street News.

**NPR:** Florida School Shooting; State Medicaid Expansions; Trump-Romney Endorsement.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

#### White House:

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Has lunch with Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis; meets with Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin; hosts Public Safety Medal of Valor Awards Ceremony.

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — Has lunch with the President and Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis; begins two-day Kennedy Space Center visit.

**US Senate:** 2:00 PM Helsinki Commission screens 'And We Were Germans' – Helsinki Commission hosts Black History Month screening of 'And We Were Germans: The Life of Hans-Jurgen Massaquoi and Ralph Giordano' – a chronicle of the journey of Afro-German Holocaust survivor Massaquoi, who emigrated to the U.S. and became the editor of Ebony magazine, one of the first monthly publications for African-Americans, and his relationship with lifelong Jewish friend Giordano – followed by discussion with director John Kantara about the film and current situation of people of African descent in Germany and across Europe Location: Cannon House Office Building, Rm 121, Washington, DC <http://www.csce.gov>

5:00 PM Senate convenes for pro forma session Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

On recess until 26 February.

**US House:** 2:00 PM Helsinki Commission screens 'And We Were Germans' – Helsinki Commission hosts Black History Month screening of 'And We Were Germans: The Life of Hans-Jurgen Massaquoi and Ralph Giordano' – a chronicle of the journey of Afro-German Holocaust survivor Massaquoi, who emigrated to the U.S. and became the editor of Ebony magazine, one of the first monthly publications for African-Americans, and his relationship with lifelong Jewish friend Giordano – followed by discussion with director John Kantara about the film and current situation of people of African descent in Germany and across Europe Location: Cannon House Office Building, Rm 121, Washington, DC <http://www.csce.gov>

9:30 AM House of Representatives convenes for pro forma session Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

On recess until 26 February.

**Other:** No relevant event scheduled.

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

Late-night talk shows did not contain political jokes or were re-runs.

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**From:** Stephen Wackowski  
**To:** [susan\\_combs@ios.doi.gov](mailto:susan_combs@ios.doi.gov); [sgibert@aol.com](mailto:sgibert@aol.com); [Tina Cuning](#); [Lesia Monson](#)  
**Subject:** Invitation: ANILCA Title 12 briefing for Susan Combs @ Thu Mar 1, 2018 1pm - 2pm (EST) (susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov)  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 20, 2018 3:22:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [invite.ics](#)

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## ANILCA Title 12 briefing for Susan Combs

[more details »](#)

**When** Thu Mar 1, 2018 1pm – 2pm Eastern Time

**Where** OS-AK, Steve's office, 4230 University Drive, Suite 300, Anchorage, AK ([map](#))

**Video call** (b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov

**Who**

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Thanks, Lesia. I notice the calendar feature is using Eastern time, which is fine, and matches the expected 9am Alaska time we discussed with you this morning. This time works for me!  
~Sally

-----Original Message-----

From: stephen\_wackowski <[stephen\\_wackowski@ios.doi.gov](mailto:stephen_wackowski@ios.doi.gov)>  
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Sent: Tue, Feb 20, 2018 11:23 am  
Subject: Invitation: ANILCA Title 12 briefing for Susan Combs @ Thu Mar 1, 2018 1pm - 2pm (EST) (sgibert@aol.com)

### ANILCA Title 12 briefing for Susan Combs

[more details »](#)

When Thu Mar 1, 2018 1pm – 2pm Eastern Time  
Where OS-AK, Steve's office, 4230 University Drive, Suite 300, Anchorage, AK ([map](#))  
Video call (b) (5), (b) (6)  
Calendar [sgibert@aol.com](mailto:sgibert@aol.com)  
Who

- [stephen\\_wackowski@ios.doi.gov](mailto:stephen_wackowski@ios.doi.gov) - organizer
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**To:** [Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com](mailto:Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com)  
**Subject:** U S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Wednesday, February 21, 2018  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 21, 2018 6:04:17 AM

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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## DOI In The News

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### Interior Chief Tells Jerry Brown He'll Listen On Offshore Oil Drilling.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/20, Kasler) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke promised California Gov. Jerry Brown on Tuesday that his department will "listen to California's objections to its plans to dramatically expand offshore oil and natural gas drilling." Zinke "made it clear that California's views will be taken into account," Brown's press secretary Evan Westrup said. According to Westrup, "the meeting followed up on a 20-minute phone call the two had in January, during which Brown asked for the same consideration Florida recently received."

### RMEF Annual Convention To Feature Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

[KGVO-FM](#) Missoula, MT (2/20, Christian) reports that the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will "present their annual convention, known as 'Elk Camp', in March near Phoenix, Arizona." Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke will deliver a keynote address at the event. Spokesman Mark Holyoak expressed interest in "Zinke's efforts to move much of the decision making power for the Department of the Interior away from Washington, D.C. further west." He said, "You have a have a hub where government's located, and that's Washington, D.C., but when it comes to the Department of the Interior, the majority of the lands they oversee are out west, and yet, the folks who oversee those lands don't live out west. For those of us who are out here, we appreciate our lands and especially our public lands where we can hunt and fish. We don't have an official stance on it, but it seems to make sense that people would be a little more in touch if they were out here to know what's going on in the west."

### At The Department Of The Interior, Industry Lobbyists And Revolving-Door Operatives Shape Sage Grouse Policy.

[Pacific Standard](#) (2/20, Tobias) reports that "public records show that industry groups and conservative politicians have had the ear of top Department of the Interior officials as they seek to dismantle conservation protections" for the imperiled sage grouse. According to the article, "a review of public records – some released weeks or months ago, others newly obtained by Pacific Standard – shed light on the industry insiders and revolving-door lobbyists and lawyers who have been influencing DOI's actions on sage grouse policy." These records suggest that the Interior Department is "in thrall to private enterprise and conservative political factions at the expense of the public interest – and the imperiled bird's future."

### Trump Budget Pushes 98 Percent Cut To Decades Old Public Lands Program.

[Public News Service](#) (2/19, Brown) reports that the Land and Water Conservation Fund "would be all but eliminated" in President Trump's proposed budget. The LWCF "gets its money from offshore oil and gas leases, but the proposed budget would divert 98 percent of those funds."

### Just Over Half Of Agencies Met A Web Encryption Security Deadline.

[NextGov](#) (2/20, Marks) reports that the Homeland Security Department's "binding operational directive, released in October, gave agencies until Feb. 13" to adopt website security improvements, but "nearly half of federal websites" missed the deadline. Notably, the Interior Department was "93 percent compliant."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Top Indian Positions In Trump Administration Remain Without Leaders.**

The [Nation Sun News](#) (2/20) reports that "tribal leaders are complaining about a lack of leadership in key Indian policy posts but one of them might soon be filled." Jean Carol Hovland, a citizen of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, has been nominated to serve as the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans at the Department of Health and Human Services, Hovland currently serves as the tribal relations advisor to Sen. John Thune.

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Candidate For BLM Director Joins Legal Team In Snake River Ranch Dispute.**

The [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (2/20, Clouse) reports that the attorney "representing a Pomeroy, Washington, rancher at the center of a legal dispute with the federal government has joined forces with one of the nation's top rancher-rights advocates, who could soon become President Donald Trump's pick to run the Federal Bureau of Land Management." Karen Budd-Falen, "who practices law with her husband, Frank, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, filed paperwork Friday with U.S. District Court in Spokane to help represent Walter 'Sonny' Riley along with Riley's current attorney, Toni Meacham, of Connell, Washington." Budd-Falen "said she remains in consideration to be tapped by Trump to become the director of the BLM."

### **BLM Closes Site Of Stray Bullet Shooting Death In For Utility Work.**

The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/20, Gómez) reports that the Bureau of Land Management on Tuesday "closed public land near Buckeye that was the site of a shooting tragedy last month." A BLM spokeswoman "said the indefinite closure is for utility work, but the federal agency will use the closure to review current uses of the 1,000-acre site."

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Judge Orders A New Look At California Water Transfer Program.**

[Courthouse News](#) (2/20, Cahill) reports that "a federal judge ordered federal regulators to reevaluate the environmental impacts of a popular California water program that allows farmers to sell water to parched southern cities and water districts during droughts." In his ruling on Feb. 15, U.S. District Judge Lawrence O'Neill "declared 'unlawful' parts of environmental reviews approved by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for a 10-year water transfer program."

### **California Farmers Told To Expect Little Water From Federal Project This Year.**

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/20, Kasler) reports that the Bureau of Reclamation "announced Tuesday that most farmers south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta who get water from the federal Central Valley Project will receive just 20 percent of their requested allocation this year." David Murillo, the bureau's regional director, said, "We have extremely low snowpack and limited anticipated runoff." The bureau "said it can't yet provide an initial allocation figure for many Sacramento Valley water agencies because of the lack of rain and the legal requirement that plenty of water be kept in Shasta Lake, the largest reservoir in California, to protect endangered species of Chinook salmon."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Redding \(CA\) Record-Searchlight](#) (2/20, Arthur).

### **Got A Way To Save Our Lakes From Invasive Mussels? It Could Earn You \$100,000.**

The [AP](#) (2/20, Ridler) reports that the federal government is offering a \$100,000 bounty prize "for the best suggestion on how to stop" the "relentless and destructive spread" of invasive quagga and zebra mussels "because scientists say they are stumped." Sherri Pucherelli, a biologist with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, said, "We might as well give it a try. Open water. That's really where the challenge is. Nothing has been developed right now that causes complete eradication in a large water body."

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **Oil Worker Killed On Talos Energy Platform In U.S. Gulf Of Mexico.**

[Reuters \(UK\)](#) (2/20, Hampton, Scheyder) says a fatality was reported Saturday on a Talos Energy platform in the US Gulf of Mexico after an oil and gas worker was injured, and later died, "while removing out-of-service fire suppression equipment." [KATC-TV](#) Lafayette, LA (2/20) reports the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement is investigating the death, "which occurred...on an oil platform" located "in an area of the Gulf of Mexico known as West Cameron 215A, about 64 miles south of Lake Charles, Louisiana." The fatality was reported at 10:30 am Saturday and "involved a third-party construction worker." The [AP](#) (2/20) reports the platform was operated by Talos subsidiary Energy Resource Technology GOM LLC. Talos CEO Timothy Duncan said, "This is a tragic event and we extend our deepest sympathies to the family, friends and co-workers of our colleague." Additional coverage was provided by the [Houston Chronicle](#) (2/20, Blum) and [WVLA-TV](#) Baton Rouge, LA (2/20, Scheidt).

### **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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#### **Obama Interior Official Broke Law To Enrich Family Member.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/20, Siciliano) reports that a former Interior Department official in the Obama Administration broke the law "to benefit a family member affiliated with a global animal welfare group, the department's inspector general said Tuesday." The results of the probe "showed that Richard Ruggiero, international conservation chief with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, violated federal ethics laws by participating in a federal cooperative agreement that financially benefited a family member." The results of the investigation were sent to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia, which declined prosecution.

#### **Monomoy Boundary Legislation Takes Another Step Towards Full House Vote.**

The [Cape Cod \(MA\) News](#) (2/20) reports that the House Committee on Natural Resources has "issued a favorable report on legislation which would settle the boundary dispute over the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge between Chatham and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service." The report, which was issued on February 2, indicates that the bill filed by Rep. Bill Keating "would have little impact on the cost of maintaining the refuge and would save U.S. Fish and Wildlife on legal fees from threatened litigation from the town and state." The report "included a dissenting opinion from three members of the committee who believe the issue should be resolved by the courts."

#### **State Asks Legislature For \$10 Million To Survey ANWR For Oil.**

The [Kenai \(AK\) Peninsula Clarion](#) (2/20, Brooks) reports that Gov. Bill Walker's administration is asking the Alaska Legislature for "permission to spend \$10 million on seismic surveying in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." It was "included as part of a supplemental spending request delivered by the state to the Legislature last week." At a presentation Monday on the supplemental request, the Senate Finance Committee was told by state officials that "the money would be used to provide better information about the oil and gas below the surface of the little-surveyed coastal plain."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/21) and [KTOO-FM](#) Juneau, AK (2/20, Harball).

#### **Invasive Bloody Red Shrimp Discovered In Lake Superior.**

The [AP](#) (2/20) reports the invasive bloody red shrimp has been found in Lake Superior. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "researchers found a single specimen of the tiny shrimp in a sample collected from the Duluth-Superior harbor last summer as part of routine surveillance for invasive species."

### **National Park Service**

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#### **A Year Of Celebration For Frederick Douglass' 200th Birthday.**

[USA Today](#) (2/20, Kaplan) reports that the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site held a bicentennial celebration over the weekend. The abolitionist's "hilltop home in the city's Anacostia section, which he called Cedar Hill, was the backdrop for a grand 200th birthday party." Tara Morrison, the National Park Service's superintendent of the historic site, said, "This bicentennial is

important because it wakes us up from historical amnesia. Sometimes we tend to know great figures only superficially, and sound bites of their career. A bicentennial creates excitement to know him deeper, to learn not only of their life but their legacy."

### **Freedom Riders Monument Superintendent Sees Site As Spark For 'Tough Conversations'.**

The [Anniston \(AL\) Star](#) (2/20, Fiscus) reports that Reginald Tiller, the superintendent of Anniston's Freedom Riders National Monument and the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument, was the keynote speaker during a Black History Month event at Jacksonville State University on Tuesday. During the speech, Tiller spoke about his "time within the National Park Service and how it's grown to embrace African American culture and history." He said, "When I came into the Park Service there were 15 African American sites but only 12 African American superintendents. I realized our organization doesn't look like the United States." Tiller noted that "since 2013, the National Park Service has established five new monuments tied to African American history."

### **Harriet Tubman National Park: Visitors Pour In During First Year, Shattering Projections.**

[USA Today](#) (2/20, Cox) reports that the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park welcomed "more than 100,000 visitors in its first year." The article notes that "the 17-acre park, one of the Park Service's smallest properties, was designed to host a maximum of 75,000 per year." Park staff are currently "prepping for the first round of upgrades, including the installation of listening stations for self-guided museum tours and the addition of books and computer equipment for a new research library."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Delmarva \(MD\) Daily Times](#) (2/20, Cox).

### **Funding, Indifference Impede Pullman Restoration As Monument.**

The [AP](#) (2/20) reports that "it has been nearly three years since former President Barack Obama designated part of Chicago's historic Pullman neighborhood as Illinois' first national monument." But there has not been much progress since then "to restore the historic factory grounds of George Pullman's namesake community." The National Park Service's visitors center, "planned for the clock tower building, has been pushed back at least a year."

### **Does The Warm Weather Mean An Earlier Bloom For The Cherry Blossoms?**

[WTOP-FM](#) Washington (2/20, Stewart) reports that the National Park Service will announce on March 1 when they expect peak bloom of cherry blossoms. Mike Litterst, with the National Park Service, aid, "We're certainly tracking the long-term weather trends. That's one of the things we look at when we make the projection for the peak bloom: What is the forecast over the next six weeks to two months? What does the historical data tell us as far as what temperatures have lead to what dates?"

### **City Officials Push For Fort Ontario To Become National Park.**

[Oswego County News Now \(NY\)](#) (2/20, Reitz) reports that "Port City officials are planning to lobby federal officials and representatives to support the Fort Ontario Study Act, which would direct the U.S. Department of Interior to conduct a special resource study to evaluate the fort's national significance and determine if the historic site should become a national park." The Fort Ontario Study Act was "approved by the House of Representatives in January 2017, but has sat on the Senate legislative calendar since June 14 without action." The city Administrative Services Committee on Tuesday "approved a formal resolution in support of the study, with the full common council to consider the measure at the upcoming Feb. 26 meeting."

### **Yellowstone Begins Capturing Bison To Reduce Population.**

The [AP](#) (2/20) reports that "at least 96 bison attempting to migrate from Yellowstone National Park into Montana have been captured for potential slaughter under a program meant to shield livestock from disease." Park officials "said Tuesday the animals were captured under an effort to cull up to 900 of Yellowstone's 4,800 bison this winter."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/20).

### **Illinois Company Will Make 40 Chimes For Flight 93 Tower Of Voices.**

The [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#) (2/20, Huba) reports that "a central Illinois percussion manufacturer has won the contract to make 40 wind chimes for the Flight 93 National Memorial Tower of Voices." Fugate Inc. was awarded the contract by the National Park Service. Fugate will



"build and deliver aluminum wind chimes and related components for the Tower of Voices, the final phase of major construction of the Flight 93 Memorial's original design."

### **Man Who Died In Yellowstone Was Looking For Hidden Treasure.**

The [AP](#) (2/20) reports that "a 53-year-old Illinois man who fell to his death in Yellowstone National Park last year was looking for a supposed hidden cache of gold and jewels that has inspired thousands to hunt in vain across remote corners of the Western U.S., according to a report by park authorities." Jeff Murphy of Batavia, Illinois, was searching for "the treasure that antiquities dealer and author Forrest Fenn said he stashed somewhere in the Rocky Mountains several years ago." Murphy is "one of at least several people who have died while looking for the treasure," and "the deaths have led some to call for an end the treasure hunt."

Additional coverage was provided by [NPR](#) (2/20, Wamsley).

### **California Man Falls Off 500-foot Cliff After Trying To Rescue Dog.**

[Fox News](#) (2/20) reports that "a 67-year-old man died after falling down a 500-foot cliff in California on Monday while trying to save his dog." The National Park Service "said the man's dog got away from him and made its way part way down a cliff at Thornton State Beach, which is in the San Francisco area." The man, "who was not identified, ran after the dog but slipped to his death."

Additional coverage was provided by [Fox News](#) (2/20, Fedschun) and [KABC-TV](#) Los Angeles (2/20, Anthony).

### **Custer Fire: How Much Did The Fight Cost?**

[KELO-AM](#) Sioux Falls, SD (2/20, Pfankuch) reports that "the state of South Dakota will pay about 35 percent of the \$2.5 million cost to fight the Legion Lake Fire, thanks to a cost-sharing agreement with the National Park Service and a reimbursement declaration by the Federal Emergency Management Agency." The reimbursable amount was set "at 75 percent of roughly \$2 million of the firefighting costs, or about \$1.5 million." According to the article, "the remaining \$1 million in costs will then be shared by the state and the National Park Service as part of a pre-existing agreement that splits the cost based on how much national park land was burned in relation to state and private lands burned."

### **Lane Closures Planned During Tree Removal On The Spur.**

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (2/20) reports that "temporary lane closures along U.S. 441 in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park will begin next week during tree removal work." According to the National Park Service, "motorists should watch for single-lane closures on the highway, also known as the Spur, between Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, beginning Feb. 26 through March 8."

### **Saxis Listed In National Register Of Historic Places.**

The [Delmarva \(MD\) Daily Times](#) (2/20, Vaughn) reports that Saxis Island in Accomack County has joined the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district.

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Trump Again Seeks To End Funding For Earthquake Early Warning System.**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/20, Lin) reports that the Trump Administration's budget request "released last week again zeroed out funding for the earthquake early warning program administered by the U.S. Geological Survey." The White House's budget proposal "for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1 requested about \$13 million less for the federal government's earthquake hazards program, including \$10.2 million for the earthquake early warning program." The Trump Administration "also proposed reducing staff for the USGS's earthquake hazards program from 240 to 222, including 15 positions that staff the earthquake early warning program."

### **Yellowstone Supervolcano Earthquake Swarm Hits 200 Shakes In Less Than Two Weeks.**

[Newsweek](#) (2/20, Bartels) reports that Yellowstone National Park "saw more than 200 measurable tremors in the week and a half between February 8 and February 18, according to the U.S. Geological Survey." In all, "the area has experienced many more shakes, but the additional ones were too tiny for scientists to pin down their origins." Michael Poland, the scientist in charge of



the USGS's Yellowstone Volcano Observatory, said, "It's slowly petering out, although these things wax and wane, so it's a bit difficult to say that it's ending."

## Opinion Pieces

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### Offshore Resources: Digging Up The Facts.

In a column for [Forbes](#) (2/20, Bradley), Robert Bradley Jr. argues in favor of expanding offshore drilling in the US, saying the Trump administration's proposed plan to do so would lead to an economic boom for states and "could support nearly 280,000 jobs nationwide and generate almost \$200 billion in investment and operational spending." Bradley says the plan is "pro-consumer, pro-taxpayer, and pro-entrepreneur" and its opponents fail to recognize the advent of new technologies and best business practices that have made offshore drilling safer since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

### Young People Must Help Protect Nation's Public Lands.

In an op-ed for the [Fort Collins \(CO\) Coloradoan](#) (2/20, Schnettler), Maggie Schnettler opposes the Trump Administration's shrinking of national monuments. She urges young people to "become more aware and active in grassroots political activism if the beauty and intrinsic value of our public lands is to be preserved for future generations."

### Additional Reading.

- *Oh No, Offshore Drilling, What Even Matters Anymore?* [Albany \(NY\) Times Union](#) (2/20, Davidson).
- *EDITORIAL, Feb. 20: Large Turnout Needed At Offshore-drilling Hearing In Raleigh.* [Wilmington \(NC\) Star News](#) (2/20).
- *All Pain, No Gain: BLM Methane Rule Rollback Hurts Westerners, Helps No One.* [Energy Collective](#) (2/19, Grossman).
- *Editorial: BLM Bigwigs Should Move West.* [East Oregonian](#) (2/20).

## Top National News

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### In Wake Of Florida School Shooting, Trump Moves To Ban Bump Stocks.

President Trump announced yesterday that he has signed a memorandum ordering Attorney General Sessions to regulate the use of bump stocks. Coverage of the move portrays the President as willing to consider "modest gun-control measures," and many reports cast the White House as facing pressure to act quickly amid a growing student movement demanding action on gun control. The [New York Post](#) (2/20, Fredericks) notes that the President said, "After the deadly shooting in Las Vegas, I directed the Attorney General to clarify whether certain bump stock devices like the one used in Las Vegas are illegal under current law. ... Just a few moments ago, I signed a memorandum directing the attorney general to propose regulations to ban all devices that turn legal weapons into machine guns. ... I expect that these critical regulations will be finalized very soon." The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Shear) reports that Trump said that the regulations "would help prevent future mass shootings," and [USA Today](#) (2/20, Korte, Gaudiano, Jackson) that he announced the order at a Medal of Valor ceremony and at the White House for firefighters and police officers, saying, "We can do more to protect our children. We must do more to protect our children."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Johnson, Berman, Dawsey) says Trump "signaled an openness to modest gun-control measures" and in private "he has indicated that he might do more, telling advisers and friends in recent days that he is determined to push for some sort of gun-control legislation, according to people familiar with the conversations." However, Trump's public positions have so far "not crossed the agenda of the powerful pro-gun-rights National Rifle Association, which endorsed him during the 2016 Republican primary and spent more than \$30 million supporting his candidacy." The ideas Trump is floating "could put him at odds with the NRA."

[Politico](#) (2/20, Lima) reports that the White House left open the possibility of "supporting a ban on assault rifles." [Breitbart](#) (2/20, Hawkins) says that when White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders was asked about an assault weapons ban, she said, "I don't have any specific announcements but we haven't closed the door on any front." [Bloomberg News](#) (2/20, Epstein)

reports that Sanders said it “hasn’t yet been determined” whether there should be a federal age limit for purchasing semiautomatic rifles.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/20, Correll, Chaitin) reports that the NRA said its position on “bump stocks” remains the same and it will wait until the Administration “has devised a rule that would ban the device before casting judgment.” Jennifer Baker, director of public affairs for the NRA-Institute for Legislative Action, said, “The NRA cannot comment until an actual rule is published with specifics that we can review. The NRA’s stance on this issue has not changed.” Major Garrett said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/20, story 5, 0:40, Glor) that the NRA “supports banning by federal rule bump stocks, but a rule does not have the force of law. It takes a while to implement. Congress could do this much more rapidly, but Republicans have shown no interest in moving this kind of legislation.” Bruce also said in the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/20, lead story, 4:40, Muir) that “lawmakers and experts seem to agree, if the President wants to ban these bump stocks, he’s likely going to need Congress to do it.”

[Reuters](#) (2/20, Rampton) reports that Sen. Dianne Feinstein “warned that the order could be tied up in court for years unless Congress also passes a bump-stock ban.” Charles Lane of the Washington Post said on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/20) that “somewhere down the line somebody is going to sue over this if it’s not actually enacted into law. ... I frankly don’t understand why there shouldn’t be a statute unless maybe the only thing that’s going on here is that President Trump is feeling under pressure over gun control and he’s got to do something really quickly.”

That sentiment is reflected in other coverage. For example, Mary Bruce reported in the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/20, lead story, 4:40, Muir) that as students are “demand[ing] action” in state capitols and “vowing Washington is next, at the White House, they’re already feeling the pressure.” The [AP](#) (2/20, Lucey, Thomas) says Trump is “seeking to show action” in the wake of last week’s school shooting, and the [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Johnson, Berman) says that following the shooting, “gun-control issues are once again being discussed nationally,” and “Trump was pushed to act.” The Post describes a “level of furious activism on the ground” in the wake of the Florida shooting that has “represented a startling shift from previous community responses to mass shootings.”

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/20, Westwood) says the White House has been under “pressure to articulate a position on proposed gun control measures in the days” since the shooting, and [The Hill](#) (2/20, Carter, Wheeler) says the shooting has “increased pressure on Trump and lawmakers in Congress to do something about the epidemic of mass shootings in the United States.” Trump’s comments, The Hill adds, “illustrate a desire on the part of the White House to show action on the issue of guns as students from the school and around the country demand change.”

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/20, story 3, 1:15, Guthrie), Lester Holt described Trump as “facing pressure” on the issue. Kristen Welker cited “White House sources” who said the Florida shooting “impacted him personally.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Berman) says it is not clear whether the aftermath of last week’s shooting “will be different than prior shootings in prompting longer-term change,” but “the level of anger and furious activity following that shooting has taken on a different tenor than what came after previous attacks.”

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/20) casts Sen. John Cornyn’s “Fix NICS” bill, which would improve the nation’s background check system, as a possible vehicle for compromise in the gun-control debate. In an op-ed for the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/20, Carlson), John Carlson, a morning radio host on KVI in Seattle, who co-authored Washington state’s “Three Strikes and You’re Out” and “Hard Time for Armed Crime” ballot initiatives, argues that it is possible to find common ground on the issue, and offers three suggestions: stiffer penalties for stealing a firearm, enforcement of the law prohibiting straw purchases of handguns, and finding a way to keep the seriously mentally ill from obtaining a firearm.

**Quinnipiac Poll: 66% Support Stricter Gun Laws.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/20, Sherfinski) reports that a Quinnipiac University poll released Tuesday “showed more people than ever backing stricter laws in the wake of last week’s school shooting in Florida.” According to the poll 66% of voters “said they support stricter gun laws – the highest ever level of support measured in the poll,” while 31% “said they were opposed.” In addition, 67% “said they favor a nationwide ban on the sale of military-style, semiautomatic weapons, compared to 29 percent who said they were opposed,” and “more than four in five” said “they support a mandatory waiting period on all gun buys.” The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/20, story 2, 2:25, Glor) also reported on the poll and highlighted former NRA member Joe Plenzler, saying he “gave up on the NRA...but he didn’t give up on the idea of finding common ground.”

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/20, story 2, 1:55, Guthrie), Lester Holt reported on "another movement going viral in the wake of this school massacre. Some gun owners are posting videos of themselves destroying or getting rid of their firearms, declaring one less gun on social media." On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/20, story 3, 1:45, Gior), Bianna Golodryga "talked to six people whose lives were touched by gun violence," four of whom "own guns" and another who is "in the market for one."

**White House Downplays Trump Criticism Of FBI Over Florida Shooting.** [Politico](#) (2/20, Nelson) reports that the White House on Tuesday walked back Trump's criticism of the FBI over the Florida shooting. White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said that Trump's [tweet](#) over the weekend saying the FBI spent "too much time trying to prove Russian collusion" and that it "missed all of the many signals" from the accused gunman was not an attack on the bureau. Said Sanders, "I think he was speaking not necessarily that that is the cause. ... I think we all have to be aware that the cause of this is that of a deranged individual that made a decision to take the lives of 17 other people. ... That is the responsibility of the shooter, certainly not the responsibility of anybody else." Pressed further, Sanders said the President was "making the point that we would like our FBI agencies to not be focused on something that is clearly a hoax in terms of investigating the Trump campaign and its involvement."

**WPost Analysis: Rubio Has Become A Symbol For Congressional Inaction On Guns.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Sullivan) reports that Sen. Marco Rubio "has become the face of congressional inaction on tougher gun restrictions, especially to the students who survived the deadly Valentine's Day shooting at a Florida high school." While he portrayed the 2016 Orlando nightclub shooting as "a life-altering event," since then he "has largely adhered to orthodox GOP positions on guns, resisting several efforts to tighten laws." He "has faced an intense backlash from Americans demanding new regulations on firearms."

The [New York Times](#) (2/20) publishes as an op-ed a letter to Rubio from Shana Rosenthal, a Stoneman Douglas graduate who interned in his Tallahassee office. In it, Rosenthal calls on Rubio to take "action against gun violence," arguing, "It is YOUR responsibility as our elected official to pass laws that protect your constituents." Rosenthal calls for "stricter gun licensing," "recognizing gun violence as a public health issue," "funding research on gun violence and gun violence prevention," "extensive background checks for gun purchases," "clos[ing] loopholes in gun purchasing (i.e. gun shows)," and "implementing a buffer period between purchasing a rifle and taking it home."

**Toomey To Introduce Bill To Expand Background Checks.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Costa, O'Keefe) reports that Sen. Pat Toomey said Tuesday that he plans to introduce legislation "expand background checks on firearm purchases." Toomey, "who once spearheaded an unsuccessful bipartisan agreement to strengthen gun laws," said, "It does feel like we have a shot at getting a little bit of momentum on background checks. ... We're going to take a swing at that and I'm hoping we'll be able to do it."

**DeSantis: Retired Military, Cops Should Be Used To Prevent School Shootings.** The [Palm Beach \(FL\) Post](#) (2/20, Bennett) reported that Rep. Ron DeSantis "says schools could enlist retired military and law enforcement officers to prevent mass shootings." Appearing Monday on Fox News, DeSantis "was supportive of a bill – cautiously endorsed by President Donald Trump – to improve federal background checks." However, DeSantis expressed "concerns about whether the measure would be effective because of past examples of 'ineptitude' by government officials." DeSantis said he favors improving school security "so that these are not soft targets anymore." Said DeSantis, "I think we can easily, in Florida particularly, have a program where retired military and law enforcement officers are enlisted to help provide school security so that these are now hard targets."

**North Carolina Officials Weigh Placing Armed Guards In Schools.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/20, Sherfinski) reports that officials in North Carolina are considering "whether or not to add volunteer armed guards to schools in the wake of last week's school shooting in Florida." According to Rockingham County Sheriff Sam Page, the program is still being developed, but he's had "good conversations" about it with county schools superintendent Rodney Shotwell. Page said, "If established, this program would act an armed force multiplier to help protect our children and teachers in Rockingham County Schools against any persons that might seek to do them harm. ... Our children are our future, and I believe we must do everything we can to protect them."

**Dallas Mayor Urges NRA To Hold Convention Elsewhere.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Phillips) reports that the NRA's annual convention is set to be held in Dallas' downtown convention center in May, but Dallas Mayor Pro Tem Dwaine Caraway is urging the group to hold the event

somewhere else. Caraway told reporters, "I am saying to the NRA, reconsider yourselves coming to Dallas. ... There will be marches and demonstrations should they come to Dallas." Caraway added, "It is a tough call when you ask the NRA to reconsider coming to Dallas, but it is putting citizens first and getting them to come to the table and elected officials to come to the table and to address this madness now." An NRA spokesman said the group has not plans to cancel the convention.

***With One Dissent, High Court Declines To Review California Waiting Period For Gun Purchases.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Barnes) reports that with Justice Clarence Thomas dissenting, the Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to review "California's 10-day waiting period for firearm sales." In a 14-page dissent Thomas said a ruling from the 9th Circuit was "symptomatic of the lower courts' general failure to afford the Second Amendment the respect due" a constitutional right. Thomas wrote, "If a lower court treated another right so cavalierly, I have little doubt that this court would intervene. ... But as evidenced by our continued inaction in this area, the Second Amendment is a disfavored right in this court." At issue in the case, the [New York Times](#) (2/20, Liptak) reports, is a California law that was upheld by the Ninth Circuit, "which accepted the state's arguments that the waiting period was justified by the need to conduct background checks and the desirability of a 'cooling off' period for gun buyers inclined to commit immediate violence."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/20, Savage) says the High Court "has ruled that the 2nd Amendment protects the right of law-abiding citizens to own guns," but has "repeatedly refused to go further by blocking strict gun regulations, including state bans on the sale of semi-automatic weapons or limits on who can carry a weapon in public."

***NYTimes Analysis Fact Checks Argument Israel Should Be A Model For US On Guns.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Kershner) reports in an analysis that former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and NRA executive vice president Wayne LaPierre have held out Israel, where "armed guards stand outside movie theaters and shopping malls, and off-duty soldiers go to the beach or the bar with an M-16 slung over their shoulders," as "a potential model" for the US. However, "contrary to the advocates' arguments for more guns, Israel has strict gun control" and "citizens who are licensed to own a personal weapon have generally undergone some military training." The Times adds that while the US "considers handgun ownership a constitutionally protected right," Israel "considers gun permits a privilege, granted by the Ministry of Public Security strictly on the basis of need." Applicants are required to undergo "background checks and need a signed bill of health from their doctor," and licenses must be "renewed every three years, and require an annual practice at a shooting range."

***WPost Analysis: Sanders' Claim On Gun Background Checks Is Based On Old Data.*** An analysis in the [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Kessler) "Fact Checker" column criticizes Sen. Bernie Sanders' claim on NBC's "Meet the Press" that "forty percent of the guns in this country are sold without any background checks." The Post says the claim is based on "one relatively small survey of 251 people about guns they obtained in 1993 and 1994," which "concluded that 35.7 percent of respondents indicated that they did not receive their guns from a licensed firearms dealer." Moreover, "in 2017, researchers at Harvard University finally published a new survey – and they found that 22 percent of gun owners who reported obtaining a firearm in the previous two years did so without a background check." Among "purchased firearms," versus those acquired via gift or inheritance, "the figure was 13 percent."

### **Trump Will Visit Florida To Host Listening Forum On Mass Shootings.**

[Townhall](#) (2/20, Pavlich) reports that President Trump will travel to Florida Wednesday to "host a listening forum with teachers, students and law enforcement officials about solutions and prevention of mass shootings." The [Washington Times](#) (2/20, Boyer) says that Trump "will host representatives involved with the shooting last week in Parkland, Florida, as well as the shootings in 2012 at the Sandy Hook elementary school in Connecticut and at Columbine High School in Colorado in 1999."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/20, Boyer) reports in a separate story that White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders "said the president will conduct a 'listening session' to hear ideas to make schools safer." [McClatchy](#) (2/20, Kumar) says Sanders "pushed back on suggestions that the administration is starting from scratch on the issues but cautioned that change may not likely happen quickly." She said, "Unfortunately when horrific tragedies like this happen, everybody wants a quick and a simple answer. ... But there isn't one ... But we want to make sure that we're addressing the problem, and we want to make sure that we're meeting and talking with as many people, that not only are affected, but that play a role in this process, as possible."

***Students Plan Anti-Gun Marches, School Walkouts.*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/19, McWhirter)

says that high school students across the country are planning anti-gun marches and school walkouts over the next weeks and months. A nationwide walkout is planned for March 14 and marches are slated for March 24. In addition, a day of protests is set for April 20, the anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting. The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Turkewitz, Hartocollis) reports that students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, where last week's shooting occurred, "were traveling on Tuesday to Tallahassee, the state capital, to call for an assault weapons ban." The trip "follows protests outside schools, social media appeals and national television appearances." Savannah Guthrie said on the lead story for [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/20, lead story, 3:05) that the protests "are showing no signs of slowing down. In fact, they're growing."

A [New York Times](#) (2/20) editorial says the teenagers protesting "have had enough. They've had enough of empty expressions of sympathy in the wake of the sort of atrocities they've grown up with." The Times says it is "too soon to tell if this righteous anger augurs a sustained youth movement for gun sanity, going beyond the occasional protest," but expresses hope that it does, arguing, "It's time, once again, for America to listen to its children. Who among us have more at stake than they?"

However, in what the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/20, Bedard) casts as "the first sign that last week's Florida high school shooting hasn't changed the gun control debate yet, the state's legislature Tuesday overwhelming voted against a plan to ban assault weapons." With Stoneman Douglas students in the gallery, "the Florida House voted 36-71 against a motion to take up a ban on assault weapons such as the AR-15" reportedly used in last week's attack. Adriana Diaz reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/20, lead story, 2:55, Glor) that "students say they're not deterred" by the House's rejection of the measure.

***Right Wing Media Portraying Stoneman Douglas Survivors As Pawns.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Grynbaum) reports that in "certain right-wing corners of the web – and, increasingly, from more mainstream voices like Rush Limbaugh and a commentator on CNN," the Stoneman Douglas students who "have emerged as passionate advocates for reform," are "being portrayed not as grief-ridden survivors but as pawns and conspiracists intent on exploiting a tragedy to undermine the nation's laws." According to the Times "baseless accounts" have "spread rapidly on social media" in which "the students are described as 'crisis actors,' who travel to the sites of shootings to instigate fury against guns." They've also been called "F.B.I. plants, defending the bureau for its failure to catch the shooter," and "puppets being coached and manipulated by the Democratic Party, gun control activists, the so-called antifa movement and the left-wing billionaire George Soros."

***Trump Jr. "Likes" Tweets Attacking Shooting Survivor.*** The [New York Post](#) (2/20, Fredericks) reports that Donald Trump Jr. "liked" a pair of tweets "attacking" David Hogg, the son of a retired FBI agent and a survivor of last week's shooting. The tweets charge that Hogg "has slammed President Trump and defended the bureau because Trump has repeatedly slamed the feds."

***Florida Teachers' Pension Plan Has Shares In Company That Made Gun Used In Attack.*** [Bloomberg News](#) (2/20, Weinberg, Mosendz) reports that according to a Dec. 31 securities filing, the "state pension plan for Florida teachers held 41,129 shares in American Outdoor Brands Co.," which "manufactured the semiautomatic AR-15 assault rifle that was used" in last week's attack. The filing also shows that the Florida Retirement System Pension Plan "invested in gun company stock issued by Sturm & Ruger Co., Vista Outdoor Inc. and Olin Corp. All of these companies manufacture firearms or ammunition, including assault rifles."

***Florida Doctor Treated Victims And Alleged Shooter After Florida Attack.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Fink) reports on Broward Health North hospital Dr. Igor Nichiporenko, who treated victims of last week's shooting as well as accused gunman Nikolas Cruz.

***Accused Gunman Attended School For Emotionally And Behaviorally Disabled Students In 2015.*** Victor Oquendo reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/20, story 2, 2:10, Muir) that Cruz's education plan shows he "was attending a school for emotionally and behaviorally disabled students in 2015. Administrators noting, while he was making progress at the alternative school, he was reported to be 'distracted by inappropriate conversations of his peers if the topic is about guns, people being killed or the armed forces.'"

***Maryland Police Find AR-15 In Home Of Teen Who Brought Gun To School.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Morse) reports that Maryland authorities revealed in court Tuesday that police "found an AR-15 assault-style rifle, handguns, tactical vests and a possible detonator device" in the home of Alwin Chen, "an 18-year-old honor roll student who last week brought a loaded handgun to school." Assistant State's Attorney Frank Lazzaro said Chen previously brought a gun to school and had created a "list of grievances against students in the school." Lazzaro said the list was



"possibly a motive for why he was going to use the gun."

**AR-15 Owners Say Their Weapon Is Misunderstood.** The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Healy) reports that although the AR-15 "has become known as the powerful weapon used by a number of gunmen to slaughter scores of people," some AR-15 owners said in interviews that "they swear by the guns," calling the rifle "a lightweight, easy-to-fire symbol of their Second Amendment rights, and said they would never give up what they called a misunderstood weapon."

**Psychiatrist Cites Mental Health System's Difficulties Identifying Mass Shooters.** In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (2/20), Amy Barnhorst, vice chairwoman of community psychiatry at the University of California, Davis, highlights difficulties in identifying dangerous individuals and argues that rather than "hoping that imposing mental health treatment on everyone who shows 'red flags' will put an end to mass shootings, we should focus on ways to put some distance between these young men and their guns."

### **Trump Says He's Been "Much Tougher" Than Obama On Russia.**

Media reports sound a skeptical note on President Trump's claim Tuesday that he's been "much tougher" than President Obama was on Russia. The President [tweeted](#) early Tuesday morning, "I have been much tougher on Russia than Obama, just look at the facts. Total Fake News!" [USA Today](#) (2/20, Jackson) calls Trump's tweet Tuesday "another push to downplay Special Counsel Robert Mueller's criminal charges against Russian nationals for meddling in the 2016 election," and says it "echoed similar sentiments he's posted over past three days." The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Sullivan) accuses Trump of "attempting to shift the blame for Russian interference in the 2016 election," and [Politico](#) (2/20, Nelson) reports he "suggested Tuesday that Democrats only became concerned about allegations of Russian interference into the 2016 election after his upset victory, pointing to a quote from former President Barack Obama as proof." Trump [tweeted](#) a remark by Obama as saying in October, 2016, "There is no serious person out there who would suggest somehow that you could even rig America's elections, there's no evidence that that has happened in the past or that it will happen this time, and so I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining and make his case to get votes."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/20, story 4, 2:50, Glor) reported that since Mueller's indictments last Friday, Trump "has soft-pedaled criticism of Russia and its President, Vladimir Putin, casting blame at" Democrats, the media, "and suggesting the FBI missed a tip that might have averted the Florida high school massacre because it was distracting by the Russia probe." White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders echoed the President, who she said "has been tougher on Russia in the first year than Obama was in eight years combined." CBS (Garrett) added, "Sanders said the President has been tougher on Russia, because he kept sanctions put in place by Mr. Obama. But this White House has not imposed any new sanctions, even though in August, the President signed legislation calling for just that." Kristen Welker reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/20, story 4, 1:20) that "those sanctions passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in response to Russia's election meddling, and Congress had asked for them to be imposed last month, but still no action yet from the White House."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/20, story 4, 3:10, Muir) reported Trump is "saying he's been much tougher on Russia than President Obama before him. The White House was then asked, why have the sanctions passed by both Democrats and Republicans not been fully imposed?" Sanders: "Look, frankly, that's not completely accurate. There's a process that has to take place. And we're going through that process." ABC's Jonathan Karl added, "The Secretaries of State and Treasury have said that the sanctions are coming, and you heard the Press Secretary say that they've begun that process, but the bottom line is that those sanctions have still not been fully implemented."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/20, Miller) says Sanders "pushed back" against criticism that the President was slow to acknowledge Russian meddling in the election, and "bristled at questions about the President's reluctance to acknowledge Russian meddling or call out Russian President Vladimir Putin by name." Said Sanders, "One of the places where I think you guys seem to get very confused, and it seems to happen regularly, the president hasn't said that Russia didn't meddle. What he's saying is it didn't have an impact and it certainly wasn't with help from the Trump campaign."

White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah said on [Fox News' America's Newsroom](#) (2/20), "The President's overall approach to Russia and dealing with Russia is measured, it is appropriate and it makes sense. Remember, the Obama Administration was aware of these efforts going back into 2014. They didn't implement sanctions until December 2016 one more before leaving office and his President has taken those sanctions and strengthened them."

Asked on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/20) about Trump's claim that he has been tougher on Russia than Obama, Rep. Ted Lieu said, "All we have to do is look at the bipartisan congressional sanctions law that was passed over six months ago. As we sit here today, Donald Trump has still refused to implement the...sanctions on Russia. He's also refused to condemn the Kremlin and he has refused to direct the FBI to prevent another attack on our democracy coming this November."

Sean Hannity said on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (2/20), "No serious President would've ignored the warnings in 2014. They would've known that Russia was a hostile nation with a hostile actor named Vladimir Putin. ... It is time for President Obama, you got to start telling the American people what you knew, when you knew it on the dossier and especially, we want to find out what the former President knew. When did he know that Hillary Clinton, the DNC paid for the Russian lies? Did he know that the dossier was used to spy on a member of the trump campaign in an election year? By the way, on the issue of election interference, why did Obama not act? Is it because he thought that Hillary Clinton was going to win and he didn't care? Why be bothered?"

A [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Rucker, Parker) analysis says that "to hear President Trump tell it, he is tougher than former president Barack Obama. He is smarter than Obama — more shrewd, more effective, more respected. The 45th president is, by his own accounting, superlative to the 44th in almost every way." Trump, it adds, has "used Obama as a foil since stepping onto the political scene in 2011, when the New York developer-reality television star became the public face of birtherism by advancing a racially-tinged falsehood about Obama's birthplace." The strategy, says the Post, also puts Trump "back into campaign mode, a place where the self-described 'counterpuncher' is most comfortable, echoing lines of attack that moved his most fervent supporters to cheers." Dana Milbank writes in his [Washington Post](#) (2/20) column that rather than "condemning or countering what the Russians themselves called 'information warfare against the United States,' Trump decided to respond with his own pro-Trump information warfare." Milbank argues that Trump, "in his refusal to respond to this Russian attack, continues to play the useful idiot."

**Trump: CNN And MSNBC Got "Scammed" By Russians Into Covering Anti-Trump Rally.** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/20, Correll) reports President Trump said CNN and MSNBC got "scammed" when they "dedicated extensive coverage to an anti-Trump rally after the 2016 election, which the special counsel indictment last week said was organized by Russians." The President [tweeted](#) Tuesday, "Bad ratings @CNN & @MSNBC got scammed when they covered the anti-Trump Russia rally wall-to-wall. They probably knew it was Fake News but, because it was a rally against me, they pushed it hard anyway. Two really dishonest newscasters, but the public is wise!" Trump, the Examiner reports, "appears to be referring to a study by NewsBusters, which is an arm of the Media Research Center, and seeks to expose liberal media bias."

**Probe Into Steele Dossier Expands To Find Out What Obama Knew.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/20, Scarborough) reports Rep. Devin Nunes is "trying to determine the breadth and reach of the unverified Russia-Trump dossier inside the US government, especially among senior leaders" in the Obama Administration during the 2016 election. Nunes released a letter Tuesday "that is being sent to as many as two dozen senior leaders in the Trump and Obama Administrations," and asks "10 questions to gauge who received the dossier information and what they did with it."

Holman W. Jenkins, Jr. writes in his [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/20) column that the Obama Administration's most consequential action over Russian meddling may well have been over its handling of the Steele dossier and the Hillary Clinton email controversy.

[The Federalist](#) (2/20, Davis), meanwhile, reports that "new evidence suggests that a former top staffer for Sen. Dianne Feinstein may be directing the post-election efforts of Fusion GPS...to vindicate a series of memos alleging illegal collusion between the Donald Trump campaign and Russian officials." Congressional documents indicate that Daniel J. Jones is "intimately involved with ongoing efforts to retroactively validate a series of salacious and unverified memos" produced by Christopher Steele and Fusion GPS. Jones, a former Feinstein staffer, currently runs the Penn Quarter Group, which bills itself as a "research and investigative advisory."

**Russian Bots Conducting Disinformation Campaign After Florida School Shooting.** [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/20, story 5, 1:40, Guthrie) reported, "Just as we saw during the election, it appears Russian bots are at it again, moving quickly to stir up chaos and anger over the gun debate in the US and using social media." NBC (Kent) added, "Within minutes of the Parkland school shooting" in Florida, "Russian bots went to work, seizing the opportunity to spread inflammatory messages on social media." The use by Russian-linked bots of the hashtag #ParklandShooting "is currently up 1,900 percent. And they're latching on to topics like gun control, mental health and false flag, that conspiracy theorists never believed happened."

[Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/20) reported that Russia is "once again tonight being

accused of interfering in American domestic affairs.” Fox News media analyst Howard Kurtz said the New York Times “[reports](#) the Russian social media blitz is part of a far-reaching disinformation campaign that includes conspiracy videos on YouTube, phony interest groups on Facebook, and so-called bots that can drive a Twitter discussion and push it into the mainstream media.”

**WSJournal Analysis: Russian Trolls Tweeted Disinformation Years Before US Election.** A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/20, Barry) analysis of 221,641 tweets from the 2,700-plus accounts Twitter deactivated late last year because they were controlled by the Internet Research Agency, the Russia-based organization the Justice Department says spread Russian propaganda across the Internet, shows that prior to the 2016 US election, they attempted to incite chaos, fear and outrage about fictitious events.

**NYTimes Analysis: Social Media Firms Lax In Enforcement Of Fake Accounts.** The [New York Times](#) (2/20, Confessore, Dance) reports that social media companies “often fail to vigorously enforce their own policies against impersonation, an examination by The New York Times found, enabling the spread of fake news and propaganda — and allowing a global black market in social identities to thrive on their platforms.” The Time notes that both Facebook and Twitter require proof of identity “to shut down an impostor account but none to set one up.” In an earnings call this month, Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey said the company was expanding what it calls “information quality” efforts, while Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg “wrote in a Facebook post in January that the company had nearly doubled the number of workers who review content for fake news and abuse, including impersonation.”

Former FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler writes in the [New York Times](#) (2/20) that the Russian campaign to disrupt the 2016 US election “benefited from the secrecy of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Their algorithms for systematically targeting users to receive certain content are off limits to the public, and the output of these algorithms is almost impossible to monitor.” Wheeler argues that the government should require social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to use an “open application programming interface” that would “make it possible for third parties to build software to monitor and report on the effects of social media algorithms.” This, he says, “would help the public identify what is being delivered by social media algorithms, and thus help protect our democracy.”

**Russian Election Chief Warns Of “Fake News” Designed To Undermine Vote.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20, Taylor) reports that with Russia’s presidential election less than a month away, the country’s top electoral official has warned of attempts to influence the vote with “fake news.” Chief of Russia’s Central Election Commission, Ella Pamfilova, told the official Tass news agency, “Given the current climate, when not a single day passes without Russia getting accused of everything bad under the sun, a wave of discrediting the election will mount. Huge resources will be shelled out by those who find it necessary to weaken our country at any price.” Misinformation and “fake news” about voting violations could be used to discredit the election, Pamfilova is quoted as saying.

### **Banks Says Trump Could Rejoin Paris Climate Pact By 2020.**

[The Hill](#) (2/20, Green) reports former White House climate adviser George David Banks told [E&E News](#) yesterday that “the White House has been considering a plan to rejoin the Paris climate agreement by 2020.” He “said that while working with the administration, he had a plan in place for the U.S. to ultimately re-enter the international accord.” Banks stated, “There’s nothing in it for the president this year. There’s nothing in it for the president next year,” but in 2020, Trump is “going to want victories.”

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/20, Siciliano) reports “Banks pointed out that the U.S. will be hosting the Group of Seven industrialized nations, or G7, in 2020, which the president could use as a foil to renegotiate the Paris deal.” Banks stated, “You get to control the agenda, you get to control all the conversation. ... The president theoretically could walk out of the meeting with heads of state and say that he had renegotiated the Paris Agreement.” In addition, he “discussed what a renegotiated Paris deal could entail, saying Congress would need to be involved.” Banks stated, “I don’t think that U.S. participation in the Paris Agreement can ever be effective without congressional support.”

### **Former EPA Administrator: Trump Regulation Rollbacks Won’t Hold Up Legally.**

[The Hill](#) (2/20, Green) reports former EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy contends “that regulations struck down by the Trump administration simply because they were issued under President Obama won’t carry weight in court.” McCarthy “called the recent political targeting of regulations at the agency a ‘real problem.’” She told the BuzzFeed livestream program “AM to



DM", "I think the important thing is none of them should be touched unless the administration has a real reason to touch them, other than it was done under the Obama administration, and that is the real problem that we see." She "specifically mentioned the administration's desire to change the Clean Water Rule, also known as the Waters of the United States rule."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

***"Will America Choose Its Children Over Guns?"*** A [New York Times](#) (2/20) editorial says the teenagers protesting in the wake of last week's school shooting "have had enough. They've had enough of empty expressions of sympathy in the wake of the sort of atrocities they've grown up with." The Times says it is "too soon to tell if this righteous anger augurs a sustained youth movement for gun sanity, going beyond the occasional protest," but expresses hope that it does, arguing, "It's time, once again, for America to listen to its children. Who among us have more at stake than they?"

***"Closing Rikers Has To Be A Team Effort."*** The [New York Times](#) (2/20) argues in an editorial that a new report by a New York state commission urging New York City to shut down Rikers Island jail ahead of the city's 10-year timeline could be helped if the state took certain measures to support the city. Moreover, the editors write, "city and state officials need to move away from the counterproductive language of mutual recrimination that will hinder this effort." Governor Cuomo "and legislative leaders who want to see Rikers closed quickly need to put their energies behind these proposals."

### Washington Post.

***"The Trump White House's Tariff 'Cures' Are Much Worse Than Any Trade Disease."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20) editorializes that Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross' recommendations to the Trump Administration on protecting domestic industry from steel and aluminum imports "will raise costs on the vast majority of companies and households that, directly or indirectly, consume those products." The Post argues that the proposed tariffs and import quotas are also harmful because they invoke an alleged harm to national security from the level of imports, but this is "not a very honest statement of the economic realities," and their implementation "invites tit-for-tat behavior by other trading nations." The proposals, if implemented, could therefore cause the global economic recovery to "go into reverse."

***"Tech Giants Should Resist Russia's Iron Grip Of Censorship."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20) criticizes Instagram's "cave-in" before the Russian government's demands for it to remove offending material posted as part of the online protest of anti-corruption campaigner Alexei Navalny. Google-owned YouTube has not yet removed the video, but "passed a warning on to Mr. Navalny's staff members that if they don't remove the content, Google might be forced to do it." The Post asserts that the episode involving Navalny's offending video "has underscored once again the degree to which Russia has become a closed society under" Putin, and that more Western companies "risk becoming instruments of censorship in authoritarian states" by complying with Putin's demands.

***"Another Blow To D.C. Public Schools."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/20) editorializes that DC Mayor Muriel Bowser made "the correct call" in asking for the resignation of Public Schools Chancellor Antwan Wilson following his "violation of school policy that allowed his daughter to get preferential treatment for enrollment in one of the city's most desirable high schools." Nonetheless, the editors assert, "major problems remain" in the city's school system, and the resignation loses "the continuity that is important to school improvement." Therefore, "the selection of a top-notch replacement for Mr. Wilson will be critical;" Interim Chancellor Amanda Alexander "has her work cut out for her" in the meantime.

### Wall Street Journal.

***"Pennsylvania's Redistricting Coup."*** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/20) blasts the Pennsylvania's redrawn congressional map as a partisan power-grab engineered by the state Supreme Court's Democratic majority. The Journal argues the court flouted the state's Constitution with its orders on the redrawing of the new map. The Journal also charges that the court-drawn map is in violation of the US Constitution's Elections Clause, which says "[t]he Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof." The Journal adds that the US Supreme Court

should block the redrawn map from being implemented.

**“Better Background Gun Checks.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/20) casts Sen. John Cornyn’s “Fix NICS” bill, which would improve the nation’s background check system, as a possible vehicle for compromise in the gun-control debate.

**“The Short-Term Future For ObamaCare.”** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/20) says in an editorial that a proposed HHS rule for short-term health insurance will make insurance more affordable, and that the elimination of the individual mandate penalty as part of the December tax bill will make the cost discount even larger.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Walmart’s Online Sales Come Under Pressure](#)

[US Pursues Saudi Nuclear Deal, Despite Proliferation Risk](#)

[Is A 3% Treasury Yield Good News Or Bad? For Now, Investors Say Good](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[Trump Calls For Ban On ‘Bump Stocks’ Used To Convert Guns](#)

[At Least 200 Dead As Syria And Allies Push Assaults On 2 Fronts](#)

[Israeli Leader Faces New Accusations As Graft Inquiry Grows](#)

[Grieving But Hopeful, Students Hit The Road](#)

[Fake Social Media Accounts Thrive Under Lax Rules](#)

[Lawyer Pleads Guilty To Lying To Special Counsel In Russia Inquiry](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[Behind Olympic Scenes, Age Is But A Number](#)

[Trump Open To Gun Limits](#)

[Schools Chancellor In DC Resigns](#)

[N. Koreans, Pence Were To Have Met In S. Korea](#)

[‘The Worst We Have Ever Seen’](#)

[Angry Fla. Teens Struggle With Shooting Trauma](#)

#### **Financial Times:**

[Walmart’s Online Challenge To Amazon Falters](#)

[Latvian Bank Chief Denounces Accusations And Death Threats](#)

[Democrats See Anti-Trump Wave Washing Through Virginia](#)

[German Armed Forces In ‘Dramatically Bad’ Shape, Report Finds](#)

#### **Washington Times:**

[Art Of The Defense Deal: Trump Aims To Dramatically Boost U.S. Arms Exports](#)

[Trump’s Base Warms To Ted Cruz After President’s Amnesty ‘Betrayal’](#)

[Trump Orders Ban On ‘Bump Stock’ Gun Modifications](#)

[Extended Short-Term Insurance Deals Latest Blow To Obamacare](#)

[Far-Right Alternative For Germany Rises As Merkel Struggles For Coalition](#)

[‘Black Panther’ Packed With Action, Diversity – But No Gays](#)

#### **Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:**

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-Victims; Maryland-Student Arrested; Russia Probe-WH; WH-Security Clearance; Russia Probe; Syrian Civil War; Severe Weather; Missing Wife; Kansas-Police Shooting; Heart Health Research; Love Your Pet Day.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Guns-Public Opinion; Mass Shooting Survivors; Russia Probe-WH; Florida School Shooting-WH; Dead Man Living Lawsuit; NCAA News; Peanut Allergy Research; UK Queen-Fashion Week; Winter Olympics News.

**NBC:** Florida School Shooting; Guns-Public Opinion; Florida School Shooting-WH; Russia Probe-WH; Russia-US Meddling; Severe Weather; Syrian Civil War; Winter Olympics News; School Safety; Syrian Civil War; NCAA News; UK Queen-Fashion Week; Winter Olympics-Snowboarder.

#### **Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida School Shooting – 20 minutes, 50 seconds  
Russia Probe – 10 minutes, 50 seconds  
Syrian Civil War – 3 minutes, 50 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting; Vice President-North Korea; Winter Olympics News.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Russia Probe; Winter Olympics News; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Florida School Shooting; 3M-Minnesota Contamination.

**NPR:** Florida School Shooting; Vice President-North Korea; Wall Street News.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

**White House:**

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Discusses the Economic Report of the President with the Council of Economic Advisers; has lunch with the Administrator of the Small Business Administration; meets with trade union leaders; hosts a listening session with high school students and teachers.

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — Hosts National Space Council meeting.

**US Senate:** On recess until 26 February.

**US House:** On recess until 26 February.

**Other:** 9:00 AM Atlantic Council discussion on Venezuela's presidential elections – 'Neither Free nor Fair: What to do about Venezuela's presidential elections?' Atlantic Council Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center conversation, on Venezuela's electoral conditions, the uncertain road ahead, and the need for a revamped role of the international community in spurring change. Speakers include Colombian Ambassador to the U.S. Camilo Reyes, Organization of American States Acting Secretary for Strengthening Democracy Gerardo De Icaza, Venezuelan Electoral Observatory President Luis Lander, Atlantic Council Latin America Center Adrienne Arsht Director Jason Marczak, Diario Las Americas Journalist Eugenio Martinez, and Georgia State University Professor Jennifer McCoy Location: Atlantic Council, 1030 15th St NW, Washington, DC  
<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/> <https://twitter.com/ACLatAM> #ACVenezuela

Under Secretary of State Shannon meets Brazil Ambassador to the U.S. – Outgoing Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Shannon attends working luncheon with Brazil Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Sergio Amaral Location: Washington, DC [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)  
<https://twitter.com/StateDept>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Stephen Colbert:** "Apparently, the Russians posted divisive Facebook ads, posed as political activists, and used the flash points of immigration, religion, and race to manipulate a campaign in which those issues were already particularly divisive. So they were using the internet to make people angry, or as cyber experts call it, using the internet."

**Stephen Colbert:** "Trump even turned last week's horrific shooting in Parkland, Florida into an attack on the FBI's investigation, saying, 'Very sad that the FBI missed all of the many signals sent out by the Florida school shooter. This is not acceptable. They are spending too much time trying to prove Russian collusion with the Trump campaign. There is no collusion. Get back to the basics and make us all proud!' I have not seen anything that classy since FDR's Pearl Harbor speech. 'December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy. Way to screw it up, Navy!'"

**James Corden:** "In other Trump news, after Oprah Winfrey hosted a panel interview with voters on Sunday's episode of 60 Minutes, Donald Trump attacked her on Twitter, calling her 'insecure.' I gotta say, yes! This is it, guys, this is the Twitter beef we've all been waiting for. The leader of the free world versus Donald Trump. It's gonna be huge! But Oprah, don't take it personally. Trump would be threatened by anyone who starts a book club."

**Trevor Noah:** "British KFCs are out of chicken. Finally, an international problem President Trump can understand."

**Trevor Noah:** "Even though these shootings are happening more and more frequently, I refuse to get used to it and refuse to accept the idea that nothing can be done. My first instinct is to talk about limiting guns, but I'm an idiot. I get it. You know, in my dumb mind, I keep thinking gun violence is somehow related to guns."

**Trevor Noah:** "It's weird how Marco Rubio is super-confident in laws and their power when it comes to restricting drugs, terrorism, and abortion, and literally everything else. It's only when it comes to guns that these people suddenly become all zen. 'Look, man, if the universe wants it to happen, it's going to happen, man. Yeah, we're all just flowing down the river of time.'"

**Jordan Klepper:** "An incident like this takes place, the libs say they want common-sense gun reform. But we all know they just want to break into my bunker, steal all my bang-bang toys, and smelt them down into Obamacare. But every time these freedom haters rage against the machine gun, we throw the book at them – specifically, this book: 'The Playbook For Evading Gun Control Debates.' Now, loyal opposers will remember we last dusted this thing off back in October, and it's full of classic tactics like, 'Now is not the time to talk about guns,' or, 'Solving one thing won't solve everything,' or, 'Hey, what's over there?'"

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**Subject:** Reorganization  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 21, 2018 4:10:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [Alliance Interior Reorganization Paper - February 2018 \(00430130\).PDF](#)

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Susan – Attached is a copy of the Alliance’s paper on reorganization. Please let us know if you have any questions. Thank you. –Bret

February, 2018

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Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has announced plans to transfer decision-making authority in the Department of the Interior from Washington, D.C. to the West, where the majority of public lands are located. Western Energy Alliance strongly supports moving bureaus such as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to the West, closer to the 245 million acres of lands and 700 million acres of federal mineral estate it administers. However, we remain concerned with a few concepts being considered, specifically regional offices based on watersheds and a rotating leadership structure among the bureaus under a “joint management area” concept. Western Energy Alliance also shares the concerns raised by the Western Governors’ Association, the National Association of Counties and others regarding the administrative challenges of a watershed-based model and likewise supports state-based models.

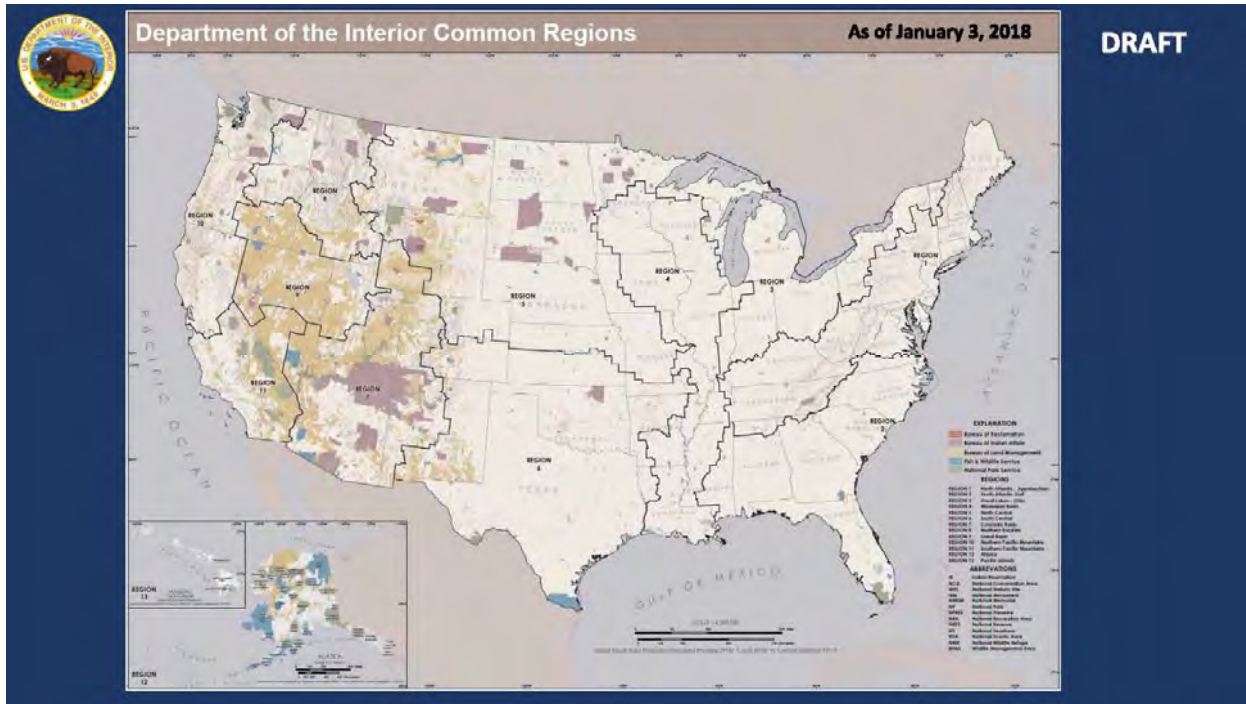
### **Proposed Guiding Principles**

1. Any Regional Management Offices should have a narrowly tailored mission statement designed to address specifically defined regional resource issues and cross-border infrastructure projects.
2. Regional management should be designed to focus on supervising and marshalling human and budgetary resources, and technical support from within Interior bureaus to facilitate efficient review and coordination with other federal agencies for large-scale, regional infrastructure projects (e.g. pipelines, highways, transmission lines) that cross state borders or otherwise entail cross-border resource transportation and/or use (e.g. water projects). Regular oil and natural gas upstream approvals do not fall into this category.
3. Regional management should only focus on tasking human resources and technical support from across Interior bureaus for key regional and cross-border programmatic resource issues, such as wildland fires, wildlife migration across state borders, and water conservation.
4. The regional offices should be designed and organized in a manner that does not create another layer of bureaucracy within Interior’s existing management hierarchy and chain of command, particularly with respect to review and authorization of private sector energy projects where federal management is already prescribed by a complex statutory framework.
5. Interior should not consider private-sector sponsored projects such as oil and natural gas field development within a producing basin as an inter-agency function that requires regional management participation and authorization.
6. Regional offices should not be inserted into the review and authorization process for BLM Resource Management Plans promulgated under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA).
7. Tasking of human resources and technical support from regional offices to support large-scale programmatic undertakings should require a checks and balances review, authorization, and oversight, from the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals and/or Deputy Secretary.
8. Regional offices should not be inserted into Interior’s current management for BLM’s oil and natural gas program including land use planning, leasing, project NEPA, and permitting, as managed and implemented under federal statutes including FLPMA, the Mineral Leasing Act, Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act (FOGRAMA), and Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act (FOOGLRA).

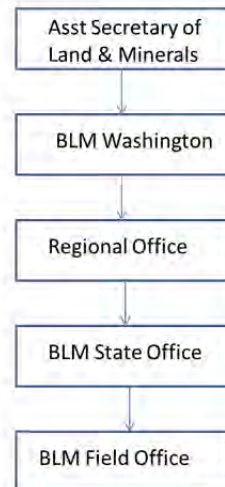
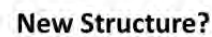
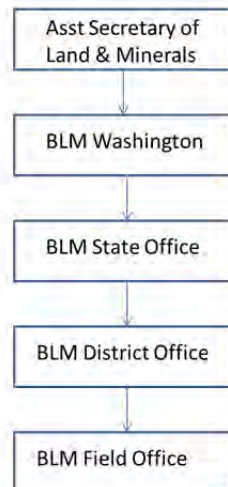


## Watersheds

A reorganization based on watersheds seems remarkably like the “landscape-level” planning that Congress rejected when overturning BLM’s planning 2.0 rule. It also has the result of dividing oil and natural gas states like Colorado, Utah and Wyoming into two and three regions.



Companies operating in a state could have to deal with up to three new regional offices, and three different ways of dealing with permitting in the same state. Companies must already navigate a multi-level hierarchy racked with inconsistencies between and within those levels before layering in a new level:



How do the regional offices fit into the structure? What happens when regional directors are from a bureau other than BLM? How does the guidance from that agency affect BLM guidance? There is already close coordination between states and their respective state BLM offices, particularly on land use planning and consistency review and oil and natural gas permitting, so presumably those state BLM offices don't go away? How does that coordination with the states work when states have multiple regional offices?

**Suggestions to Consider:** Western Energy Alliance believes moving BLM out West while simply devolving decision making to the existing state offices would achieve Secretary Zinke's goal of decision making that is closer to the land and people affected by the decisions rather than centralized in Washington.

1. However, when looking at a regional structure, we request consideration of regions drawn using watersheds as a guideline, but without splitting states apart. BLM State Offices could then seamlessly dovetail into the regional office.
2. Given the addition of a new layer of bureaucracy with the regional offices, we request that one be removed, namely the BLM district offices.
3. Reorganization represents an opportunity also to address extremely long processing times for environmental analyses under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) both for land use plans and for energy projects. In many cases, field offices do not have the experience and expertise to conduct NEPA planning in a reasonable timeframe, and could use the help from NEPA planning experts usually located at the state offices. Furthermore, governors play an important role in consistency reviews of land use planning documents. Regions based on states would maintain the governors' primacy while also enabling state-level expertise to help reduce NEPA processing times.
4. We request DOI consider supporting efforts to delegate primacy for oil and natural gas approvals to the states. The House Natural Resources Committee has already passed a bill out of committee, the SECURE American Energy Act, that includes the delegation of primacy for drilling permits. By removing BLM from the permitting process in states that achieve delegation, resources could be shifted to completing NEPA documents in a timely manner.

## **Regional Leadership**

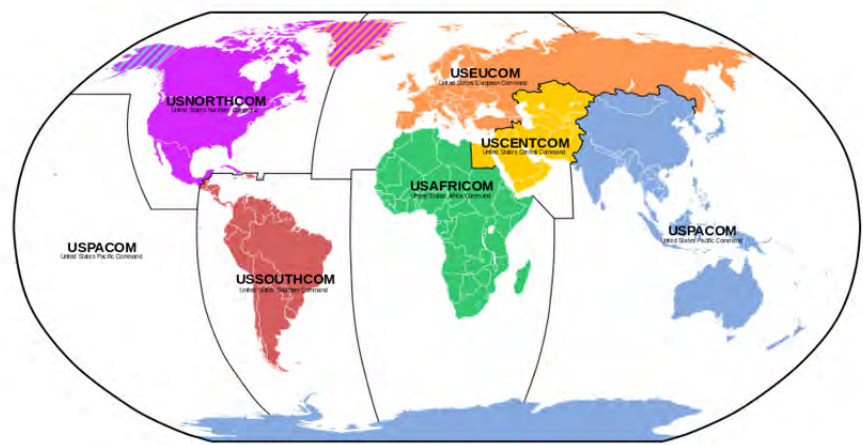
It appears that regions will be overseen by leaders who would come from one of the bureaus, which raises issues associated with different missions. For example, the National Park Service has a preservation-only mission, whereas BLM has a multiple-use mandate. We are concerned a NPS regional director could make decisions adverse to oil and natural gas projects that may not accord with the multiple use and sustained yield mandate in FLPMA.

On the other hand, the Frequently Asked Questions for the Common Regional Boundaries indicates that regional leaders would only control decisions involving more than one bureau. Given that approvals for oil and natural gas development involve primarily BLM, we recommend that the full chain of approvals—from decisions about which areas are open for leasing at the RMP stage through project NEPA and permitting—not be considered an inter-agency function that regional directors are involved in. Western Energy Alliance would like to propose a structure for oil and natural gas approvals that maintains autonomy from another layer of management.

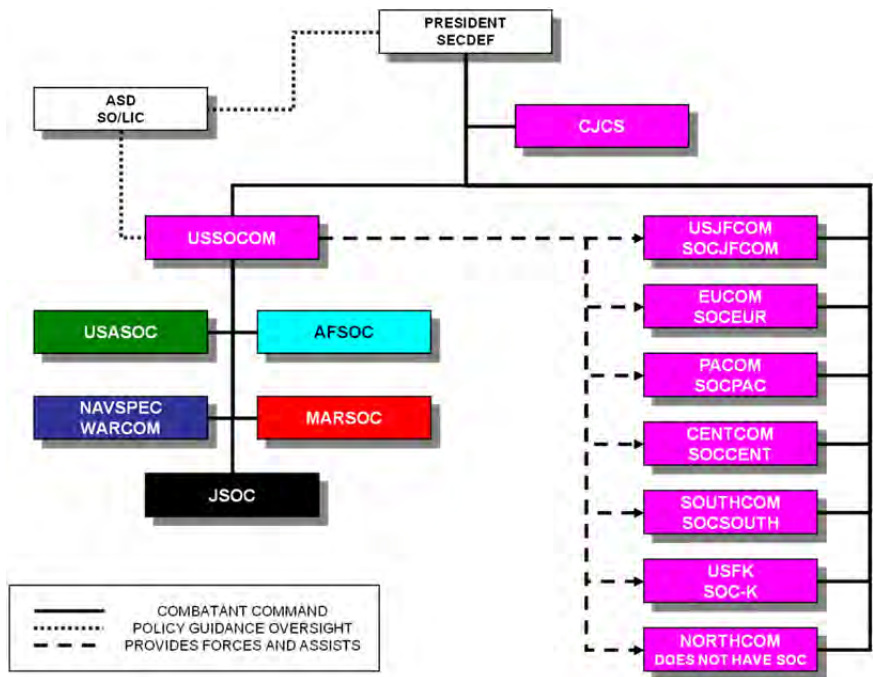
**Suggestion to Consider:** Looking at the unified command structure, which reports suggest may have been an inspiration for Secretary Zinke, there may be an opportunity to treat oil and natural gas approvals as a



functional command that crosses geographic boundaries. Just as six of the nine unified combatant commands are geographically based...

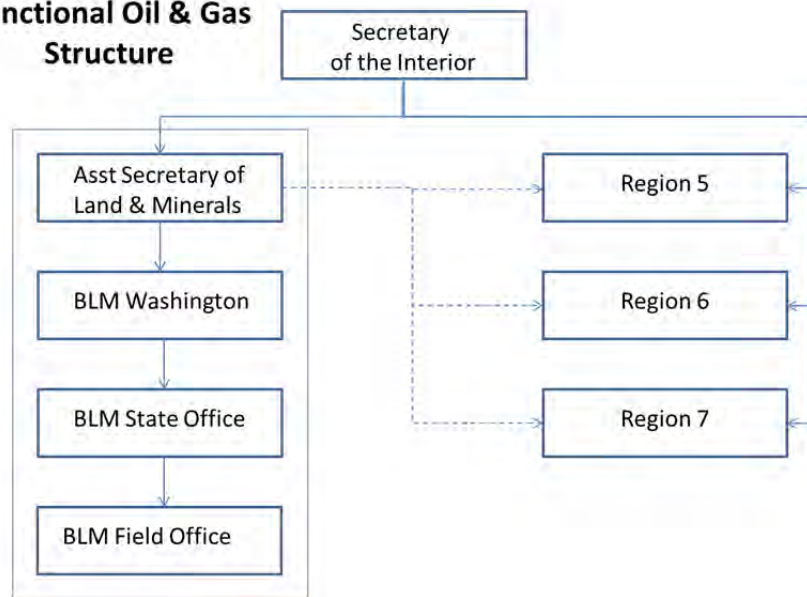


three are based on function, such as the Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).



Special forces units operate within each geographic command along a separate command structure but with coordination within the overall geographic command. Such a functional structure could be a model of how oil and natural gas approvals could be coordinated.

## Functional Oil & Gas Structure



Such a functional structure could avoid the problems observed with the Energy Pilot Offices that were established in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The goal of the seven pilot offices was to improve oil and natural gas permit processing timelines. Some of the offices brought together Forest Service, Fish & Wildlife Service and other agency personnel involved in some way in the permitting process. The bureaucratic rearrangement did not result in more efficiency, and permitting timelines are now higher than they were in 2005. In some offices, we found the addition of other agency personnel actually reduced efficiency, as the staff from the other agencies imposed new requirements to justify their existence in the pilot offices. It was a warning that reorganization can just lead to more bureaucracy and not necessarily greater efficiency.



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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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- UPI: A Bad Year For Oil And Gas Transparency, Watchdog Says.

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- Wis. Tribe Fights For Quick Win In Gambling Deal Dispute.

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#### **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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#### **Fish And Wildlife Service**

- Associated Press: Mexican Gray Wolf Population Grows By 1 Animal, Survey Says.
- Panama City (FL) News Herald: Meeting Planned To Discuss Panama City Crayfish Listing.
- Spokane (WA) Spokesman-Review: Idaho Students Asked To Submit Waterfowl Art.

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- Washington Post: It's Only Feb. 21, But These Cherry Blossoms Don't Care.
- Missoulian (MT): Rebuilding Of Sperry Chalet Begins With An Open House.
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## DOI In The News

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### Interior Department's Drone Army Fights Fires And Monitors Wildlife.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/21, Carlton) reports that the Interior Department released its drone-flight data Wednesday, which showed that it is dramatically increasing its use of drones. According to the [Wyoming Business Report](#) (2/21), Interior's Office of Aviation Services launched "nearly 5,000 missions in 2017" with its "fleet of 312 unmanned aircraft."

[UAS Magazine](#) (2/21) reports that "over the past seven years," the Interior Department has "seen drones accomplish missions faster and cheaper than traditional aviation." The next stage of the program "starts soon with the testing of a new class of drones to assist in fire suppression and fuels management."

[KPVI-TV](#) Idaho Falls, ID (2/21) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, "Interior is committed to preventing the spread of catastrophic wildfires through smarter and more aggressive practices and tactics. I had the opportunity to join our wildfire professionals last year and was able to test some of the technology that is now being used. After seeing the capabilities, I know it will continue to make a big difference in firefighting. The UAS program is a perfect example of leveraging technology to fight fires in safer and more efficient ways to ensure we are protecting the men and women on the fire line, members of the public, and local communities. Coupled with more aggressive fuels management, this technology will help prevent and control catastrophic wildfires."

[Unmanned Aerial Online](#) (2/21, Lillian) reports that Harry Humbert, deputy assistant secretary for public safety, resource protection and emergency services, said, "The Department of the Interior has worked hard to build a UAS program that is a leader in non-Department of Defense applications. This technology opens limitless possibilities for resource managers. The department is proud of the collaboration that uses technology to support wildland fire and natural resource management more safely and more efficiently than ever before."

### A New Structure For The Interior Department Takes Shape.

The [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (2/21, Segerstrom) reports that details of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's reorganization plan are "coming into view as he prepares to pitch his plan to Congress" Zinke revealed in a January address, "We're looking at reshaping our current bureau-based regional system of management and moving to a system based on ecosystems, watersheds and science – rather than the current state or regional boundaries." Zinke has touted the proposal as "a logical and cost-saving measure that would promote regional cooperation and get more 'boots on the ground,' a common refrain from the former Navy SEAL". The plan has been welcomed by Republicans on the House Committee on Natural Resources. However, "it's facing strong criticism from others across the political spectrum – including industry advisers, conservation organizations, former Interior staff and the Western Governors' Association. "

### Interior Secretary Zinke Demanded Confidential Energy Data. So Two Scientists Left.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/21, Eilperin) reports, a pair of "senior U.S. Geological Survey officials have stepped down after Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke demanded that they provide his office with confidential data on the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska before it was released to the general public." Charging that Zinke's request "violated the USGS's scientific integrity policy

because such commercially valuable data should not be shared in advance,” the officials – Murray W. Hitzman and Larry Meinert – “had served as the agency’s associate director for energy and minerals and acting deputy associate director for energy and minerals mission area, respectively.” However, Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift “said Wednesday that the solicitor’s office had determined that Zinke and his deputy, David Bernhardt, have [the] right to ‘review data, draft reports, or other information as it deems necessary’ under the department’s 1950 reorganization plan.”

Also reporting are [The Hill](#) (2/21, Green), the [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (2/21, Ruskin), and [Mother Jones](#) (2/21, Federman).

### **Obama Official Funneled Thousands Of Dollars In Grant Money To Family.**

The [Washington Times](#) (2/21, Wolfgang) reports that Richard Ruggiero, who was the Fish and Wildlife Service’s International Conservation Chief during the Obama Administration, “helped facilitate payments of thousands of dollars in federal money to a family member.” Ruggiero “helped set up a \$126,781 cooperative agreement with the nonprofit International Fund for Animal Welfare” intended to “establish a professional training program for conservation leaders overseas.” The cooperative “agreement was later extended,” paying out a total of \$324,108, with \$5,684.29 for training going “to a family member of Mr. Ruggiero...who appears to have been his wife.” In a report, the Interior Department Inspector General said, “Ruggiero admitted that he did not recuse himself from the cooperative agreement, despite having had several reminders and opportunities to do so throughout the agreement’s period of performance.”

Also reporting are the [AP](#) (2/21, Brown), [E&E Publishing](#) (2/21, Doyle), and [Government Executive](#) (2/21, Clark).

### **Swain Settlement Money Part Of Trump’s Budget.**

The [Waynesville \(NC\) Smoky Mountain News](#) (2/21, Stone) reports that President Trump’s proposed budget “calls on Congress to fund the overdue remaining balance of \$39.2 million owed to Swain County from the North Shore Road settlement agreement made with the federal government back in 2010.” The White House’s budget “requests \$20 million for fiscal year 2019 and the remaining \$15.2 million for fiscal year 2020.” However, the article says that it is “nowhere close to being approved without major compromises.”

### **A Bad Year For Oil And Gas Transparency, Watchdog Says.**

[UPI](#) (2/21, Graeber) reports the watchdog group Transparency International said it’s been a “very bad year” for transparency in the oil and gas industry in its global corruption index released Wednesday. “Americans are all too aware of the undue influence of money and politics and that many policy and resource allocation choices are not necessarily made in the public interest but rather special interests,” said Zoë Reiter, a senior project leader for Transparency International.

Additional coverage was provided by [Oil Price](#) (2/21, Calcuttawala).

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Interior Promises Update On Mashpee Tribe Land Review In 30 Days.**

The [Cape Cod \(MA\) Times](#) (2/21, Stening) reports that the Interior Department has notified the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe that “it is still reviewing evidence to determine whether the tribe qualifies to have land taken into trust under a different legal category from one rejected by a federal judge in 2016, and will provide an update on that process in one month.” In an email Tuesday, Associate Solicitor for the Interior Department Eric Shepard “wrote that the federal agency is still evaluating arguments and submissions from parties involved in the ongoing effort and cannot provide a specific date by which to issue a decision.” However, “he said the matter ‘remains a top priority’ and will provide an update in 30 days.”

### **Idaho Tribes Drop DOI Law Enforcement Funding Suit.**

[Law360](#) (2/21, Phillis) reports that “a D.C. federal judge agreed Tuesday to dismiss the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation of Idaho’s suit alleging the U.S. Department of the Interior paid only a fraction of the roughly \$1.63 million it owed to support the tribes’ justice system programs.” U.S. District Judge Trevor N. McFadden rejected “the case on the same day the tribes advised him they were voluntarily dismissing the suit.”



## **Wis. Tribe Fights For Quick Win In Gambling Deal Dispute.**

[Law360](#) (2/21, Westney) reports that "the Forest County Potawatomi Community has again urged a D.C. federal judge to award the tribe summary judgment in its bid to vacate a Bureau of Indian Affairs decision rejecting an amendment to the tribe's gambling deal with Wisconsin, saying the change wouldn't put another tribe on the hook for payments to protect the Potawatomi's casino business."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Garfield County Commissioners Want BLM In Grand Junction, Not D.C.**

[Aspen Public Radio \(CO\)](#) (2/21, Orme) reports that Garfield County Commissioners on Tuesday signed a resolution in support of relocating the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management to the West. The resolution "states that those who manage BLM land should be living in the communities surrounded by BLM land."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/22, Webb) and [KJCT-TV](#) Grand Junction, CO (2/21, Havener).

### **BLM Increases Fees At Red Rock Canyon.**

[KNPR-FM](#) Las Vegas (2/21) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has raised fees to the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area "including the scenic loop road and campgrounds to \$15 per car, an increase of \$8." Traveling "into the area on foot now costs \$5, up from \$3." The BLM "says this is the first fee increase since 2011, and that fees are used to improve services in the area."

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Trump's Plans To Expand Offshore Drilling Face Headwind On Atlantic Coast.**

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (2/21, Osborne) reports unexpected, bipartisan opposition to the Trump administration's proposed offshore drilling plan from states on the Atlantic coast is presenting a significant obstacle "to the long-held designs of the energy industry." Previously, politicians in Virginia, South Carolina and North Carolina expressed support for offshore drilling, "[b]ut new governors in the three states...have all reversed the positions of their predecessors." Consumer Energy Alliance President David Holt said, "This last election we've seen a significant shift at the leadership level. ... If you look at the last 10 years, the majority of governors and the public had been supportive." While the Trump administration is not legally required to secure the support of coastal governors to expand drilling, moving forward without doing so "would force the administration to defy members of its own party," to include South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster (R), who was an early backer of President Trump.

***Zinke Meets With California Governor On Offshore Drilling.*** [The Hill](#) (2/21, Cama) reports Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and California Gov. Jerry Brown (D) met privately on Tuesday in Brown's Sacramento office to discuss "the governor's objections to oil and natural gas drilling off the state's coast." A spokesperson for Gov. Brown, Evan Westrup, said in a statement, "This meeting was an opportunity to continue last month's conversation ... regarding the state's strong opposition to the federal government's decision to expand oil and gas drilling off of California's coast."

### **As Trump Administration Holds Hearing In Richmond Area, Virginia Officials Vow To Fight Offshore Drilling.**

The [Richmond \(VA\) Times-Dispatch](#) (2/21, Zullo) reports that on Wednesday, Virginia officials and business groups pledged to fight "tooth and nail" against President Trump's offshore drilling plan, citing environmental concerns and fears drilling would hinder military training exercises off Virginia's coast.

The [AP](#) (2/21, Finley) reports, "environmental activists, business groups and a retired U.S. Navy admiral in Virginia blasted the Trump Administration's offshore drilling plan...claiming that it would interfere with military training." Virginia Beach city councilman John Uhrin also said he's not convinced that offshore drilling would bring lasting economic benefits to the region. Virginia Petroleum Council executive director Miles Morin, on the other hand, said that would only be in the short run, as those jobs "would eventually be homegrown." Morin "added that offshore

energy companies would bring more tax revenue and bolster the region's shipyards and the Port of Virginia, among other businesses."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Augusta \(VA\) Free Press](#) (2/21), the [Hampton Roads \(VA\) Virginian-Pilot](#) (2/21, Hampton), and [Maritime Executive](#) (2/22, River).

**Activists Oppose Drilling Off Virginia's Coast.** [Capital News Service](#) (2/21, Celentano) reports approximately 75 activists and lawmakers rallied in Richmond on Wednesday in protest of "the Trump administration's plan to allow drilling of Virginia's coast" in advance of a BOEM-sponsored public hearing. US Rep. Donald McEachin (D) said, "The Trump administration's decision to push for drilling in more than 90 percent of our nation's coastal waters, including off the coast of our beautiful commonwealth, poses serious dangers to our economy and our environment." Opponents also raised concerns over the impact of the plan to the region's military readiness. Additional coverage was provided by [WTVF-AM](#) Blacksburg, VA (2/21, Noe-Payne) and [WTKR-TV](#), Norfolk, VA (2/21, Ponton)

**Northam On Trump Administration Blocking Public Comment On Offshore Drilling.** In a statement released by Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, the [Augusta \(VA\) Free Press](#) (2/21) reports Northam calls on the BOEM to hold additional hearings on offshore drilling in Virginia's Tidewater region and says that "[a]s governor, I will use every tool at my disposal to ensure no drilling occurs off Virginia's coast."

### **Both Sides Continue To Debate Offshore Drilling.**

[WITN-TV](#) Greenville, NC (2/21) reports that several local groups, as well as Gov. Roy Cooper, are requesting that North Carolina be exempted from the federal offshore drilling plan. Despite arguments to the contrary, "representatives from the North Carolina Petroleum Council say drilling isn't an attack on employment, but would instead provide an opportunity for stable careers in an area with dominant seasonal employment." According to NC Petroleum Council executive director David McGowan, "There's a desperate need for good paying jobs that are sustainable and that can be taken advantage of by people that don't necessarily need a college degree."

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **U.S., Cuban Officials To Meet In Florida About Cooperation On Oil Spill Response.**

The [Tampa \(FL\) Tribune](#) (2/19, Guzzo) reports that "two months after the Trump administration announced it would open no more of Florida's coast to oil drilling, U.S. government agencies will meet with their counterparts from Cuba about protecting the state's shores from oil spills there." The talks "come under an accord signed by the Obama administration for the two nations to work together on containing and cleaning any oil spills within one country's borders that threatens the other."

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Mexican Gray Wolf Population Grows By 1 Animal, Survey Says.**

The [AP](#) (2/21, Bryan) reports that "at least one more endangered Mexican gray wolf is roaming the American Southwest compared with a year earlier, and U.S. wildlife officials said Wednesday that lower survival rates among pups are primarily to blame for the lack of strong growth in the population." The annual survey counted "114 wolves in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico." The figure "reflects on-the-ground data collected over the winter along with aerial surveys done in January and February." According to the article, "officials lamented that the numbers were not what they had hoped for and said they were focused on improving the genetics of the wild population as a way to build more robust numbers." Amy Lueders, Southwest regional director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said in a statement, "We all understand the challenges involved in protecting and restoring wild populations of this endangered species."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (2/21, Miller).

### **Meeting Planned To Discuss Panama City Crayfish Listing.**

The [Panama City \(FL\) News Herald](#) (2/21, Landeck) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold a public meeting Thursday, Feb. 22 for public input on a proposal to list the Panama City Crayfish. At the meeting, the FWS will be "looking for more information that could influence the



decision-making process, including more information about the creature's status, distribution or planned activities that could affect the species, according to a press release."

### **Idaho Students Asked To Submit Waterfowl Art.**

The [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (2/21, Francovich) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is holding its Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program and Art Competition for all students from kindergarten to grade 12. The deadline for submissions is March 15.

## **National Park Service**

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### **It's Only Feb. 21, But These Cherry Blossoms Don't Care.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/21, Fritz) reports that Washington D.C. is experiencing "exceptional warmth" for the second winter in a row. As a result, "plants are starting to come out of their dormancy," and "cherry blossoms – actual blossoms – are popping out on the Mall." Last year, "peak bloom" occurred March 25, according to the National Park Service.

Additional coverage was provided by [Washingtonian Magazine \(DC\)](#) (2/21, Freed).

### **Rebuilding Of Sperry Chalet Begins With An Open House.**

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/21, Backus) reports that the National Park Service will hold an open house next week on the rebuilding of Glacier National Park's historic Sperry Chalet dormitory and "unveil its preliminary concepts to rebuild the iconic building that was gutted in a firestorm last summer." Glacier Park Superintendent Jeff Mow said, "We're excited to kick off our schematic design process for the Sperry Chalet rebuild. This is the first of several opportunities for the public to engage and comment and we hope it will be informative to our selected architects as they engage in the design process. Come and tell us your Sperry Chalet story."

### **Public Meeting Scheduled For Knob Creek Tavern.**

The [LaRue County \(KY\) Herald](#) (2/21) reports that the National Park Service has planned a public meeting on Wednesday, February 28 "to share the schematic designs for new exhibits for the Lincoln Tavern at Knob Creek building, at the Boyhood Home Unit of Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park."

### **Pensacola Ferry Service: Ticket Prices And Schedules Announced.**

The [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (2/21, Gabriel) reports that in response to queries from Pensacola Beach leaders, the National Park Service on Tuesday "announced ticket costs, schedules" and other information about "upcoming ferry service between the beach and downtown Pensacola." The details "came after beach leaders complained during a meeting of the Santa Rosa Island Authority earlier this month that they lacked details needed to plan for the arrival of ferry passengers." Dan Brown, superintendent of Gulf Islands National Seashore, "said Tuesday that the ferry service is on schedule to start May 19 with service between downtown Pensacola, Pensacola Beach and Fort Pickens." He added that "tickets will cost no more than \$20 for an adult, all day, hop-on, hop-off ticket."

### **Yellowstone Fee Proposal Advances In Wyoming Legislature.**

The [AP](#) (2/21, Moen) reports that "a proposal advocating for the collection of a fee at Yellowstone National Park to fund wildlife conservation efforts in the states surrounding the park is advancing through the Wyoming Legislature." The nonbinding resolution "passed the state House Travel, Recreation, Wildlife & Cultural Resources Committee on a 9-0 vote Wednesday." It also "approved expanding the concept to Grand Teton National Park."

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **US Coral Reef Task Force To Focus On Conservation.**

The [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (2/22) reports that "the Department of the Interior and the Department of Commerce, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, will host the 39th biannual meeting of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force this week." The meeting, which will be held on Feb. 22 at Interior's headquarters in Washington, D.C., will be co-chaired by Douglas Domenech, Interior assistant secretary Insular and International Affairs, and W. Russell

Callender, Ph.D., assistant NOAA administrator for the National Ocean Service. The meeting will "emphasize the importance of coral reef conservation, focus on the impacts of recent natural disasters on coral reefs, explore cutting-edge research in natural disaster recovery and resilience of coral reefs and highlight plans for 2018 as the 'International Year of the Reef.'"

### **Islandwide Water Outage On Tinian.**

The [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (2/22) reports that a scheduled water service interruption is planned "on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018, from 8am to 2pm for the entire island of Tinian." The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will "replace an existing non-working 8-inch gate valve, which will isolate the old water tank from the newly constructed half-million tank." After the work, "CUC will be able to supply extra volume of water to the island." The project is funded by the Office of Insular Affairs through the CNMI CIP office and the Mayor of Tinian's Office.

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **California's Coastal Marshes Could Be Washed Out To Sea By 2110.**

[Southern California Public Radio](#) (2/21, Margolis) reports that California's coastal marshes will "likely disappear by the next century if we continue emitting greenhouse gases at current levels," according to a new study from the U.S. Geological Survey and the University of California Los Angeles. Glen MacDonald, geologist at UCLA and co-author of the paper, said, "Essentially, 100 percent of these vegetated marshes in the state would disappear." MacDonald "said some marshes could survive if allowed to migrate inland, but those would be the exception."

### **NASA's Newly Released Map Shows How Quickly Antarctica Is Melting Away.**

[MLive \(MI\)](#) (2/21, Raven) reports that NASA "released a new photo and warning on Tuesday, Feb. 20 that Antarctica could melt away into the ocean much sooner than expected." The U.S. space agency's study was published in The Cryosphere journal, and "identified the fastest speed-up of Antarctic glaciers during the seven-year study period." The article notes that "NASA specifically used information from the U.S. Geological Survey Landsat satellite to offer the photo above in changes in ice-sheet movement on Earth's most southernmost continent."

### **Earthquakes In Southern Kansas Linked To Oil, Gas Production.**

[UPI](#) (2/21, Hays) reports that over the past five years "seismographs have documented a significant increase in earthquakes in southern Kansas" and "the latest research suggests the oil and gas industry's activity tied to hydraulic fracturing is to blame." Before 2012, "no documented magnitude 4 or greater earthquake had shaken southern Kansas" but "between 2012 and 2016, as oil and gas activity increased, seismographs registered six such earthquakes." UPI adds "to better understand the link between seismic activity and hydraulic fracturing, researchers with the U.S. Geological Survey analyzed 6,845 earthquakes that shook Harper and Sumner counties, home to the newest wave of oil and gas exploration." According to researchers "the earthquakes are not linked specifically to hydraulic fracturing, wastewater injection – an activity that follows fracturing – may be linked to them." [Newsweek](#) (2/21, Pereira) reports "between 1973 and 2012, there was one magnitude-2 earthquake in Kansas, according to researchers. Between 2013 and 2016, there were 127 earthquakes of a magnitude 3 or above in Kansas; 115 of those shook Harper and Sumner counties alone."

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Don't Open Up California's Coast To Oil Drilling.**

In an op-ed for the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/20, Baker), California state assemblywoman Catharine Baker says the Trump Administration should protect the California coastline and shelve its plan to open up coastal waters to offshore oil and drilling. Baker says California's coasts offer the world "unparalleled and irreplaceable environmental value" and provide Californians with 500,000 jobs and "\$662 billion in wages and \$1.7 trillion in gross domestic product." Given the economic and environmental importance of the California coastline, Baker "introduced Assembly House Resolution 70 and co-authored Assembly Joint Resolution 29 with Democratic and Republican colleagues to demand the Trump administration reject plans for new leases off our coastline." Baker believes these resolutions should offer the Trump administration with a clear

message: "Leave our coasts alone, for the good of our environment, our economy, and future generations who deserve an opportunity to build their happy memories on our coasts."

### **Olympic National Park Is No Place For Growler Jets.**

In an op-ed for the [Seattle Times](#) (2/21, Winger), U.S. Olympic athlete and American record holder for javelin throw, Kara Winger, a member of Olympians for Public Lands, opposes the Navy's "proposed plan to increase training flights over Olympic National Park." If Navy Growler jet training flights are increased over Olympic National Park, Winger says that "one of the world's most diverse soundscapes will be compromised."

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Feds Are Still The Best Option.* [Citrus County \(FL\) Chronicle](#) (2/21, Gotterup).
- *Buckeye Closure Gives Target Shooters A Do-over (So Don't Mess It Up).* [Arizona Republic](#) (2/21, Allhands).
- *Path Forward Needed For Water Infrastructure.* [Star of Grand Coulee \(WA\)](#) (2/21, Newhouse).
- *Opinion: Interior Department Moves To Sell Off Public Lands.* [Adventure Journal](#) (2/21, Thompson).
- *It's Time To Think Beyond Bears Ears.* [Outside](#) (2/21, Nelson).

## **Top National News**

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### **Media Analyses: Trump's Gun Stances Could Put Him On Collision Course With NRA.**

At the White House on Wednesday, President Trump hosted a listening session with students and families impacted by school shootings. Trump [tweeted](#) last night, "I will always remember the time I spent today with courageous students, teachers and families. So much love in the midst of so much pain. We must not let them down. We must keep our children safe!!" Media coverage of the session is heavy and largely positive, highlighting the President's apparent willingness to accept some gun control measures – particularly more stringent background checks and raising the age for buying certain types of guns. At the same time, the reporting highlights the political difficulties ahead for such initiatives, and cautions that Trump's course could lead to a clash between him and House Republicans – and particularly with his NRA allies.

Jonathan Swan of Axios, for example, said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/21) that Trump "is...saying...kids shouldn't be allowed to have guns, we should raise the age to 21. That's never going to fly. That's never going to fly with the NRA." Jonathan Karl said in the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/21, lead story, 7:50, Muir) that the NRA "is already out with a statement opposing that."

In the lead story for [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/21, lead story, 2:50, Guthrie), Peter Alexander called Trump "a fierce advocate for the Second Amendment," but added that he appears "open to modest changes." The [AP](#) (2/21, Lucey, Daly) similarly calls Trump "a strong supporter of gun rights," and says that while he has "indicated in recent days that he is willing to consider ideas not in keeping with National Rifle Association orthodoxy," gun owners "are a key part of his base of supporters." Major Garrett also said in the lead story for [CBS Evening News](#) (2/21, lead story, 3:55, Glor) that Trump told the NRA last year "he would never, ever infringe on existing gun rights," and "that promise will now confront the new politics emerging after last week's mass shooting." Likewise, [Fox News](#) (2/21, Pappas) indicated that Trump's positions "could face resistance from gun rights groups" like the NRA.

Jackie Kucinich said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/21), "This is a President who wants to be seen as a man of action. He wants to be seen as someone who can make a difference. And perhaps this is driving some of the meeting that he had. That said, this is not going – I don't mean to be the naysayer here – but it's not going to stay out of the political realm for long."

In fact, [Politico](#) (2/21, Bade, Schor) reports, Trump's "tentative embrace of a narrow background-checks bill is about to hit a towering hurdle: members of his own party." While Senate Majority Whip Cornyn is seeking support "for a bipartisan bill that would enhance reporting of violent criminals to the FBI's background-check database in order to stop them from buying firearms," House conservatives "are unwilling to sign on, unless the measure is coupled with so-called 'concealed-carry' legislation backed by the NRA," a move that would "have the net effect of loosening gun controls." Politico cites "four leadership and conservative sources" who said that before a vote in December, "House GOP leaders promised conservatives that they would

not decouple the background-checks bill from the concealed-carry language," which "sets up the possibility of a clash between House and Senate Republicans." The [Daily Caller](#) (2/21, Datoc) reports that Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) said the House will defeat background-check legislation unless it includes "provisions guaranteeing concealed carry reciprocity."

Byron York of the Washington Examiner said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/21) that "what remains to be seen is what exactly would he be behind in terms of what action. He seems clearly to be in favor, or thinking about favoring raising the age for buying a long gone gun to 21 as it is for a handgun, to some sort of enhanced background checks. I think the big debate will be about assault weapons. That is always what this comes down to."

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/21, Kumar) describes the meeting as "emotionally wrenching," while the [Washington Times](#) (2/21, Boyer) and [USA Today](#) (2/21, King, Korte) similarly describe it as "emotional." USA Today says Trump "appeared open to a wide range of ideas, including raising the minimum age to buy an assault rifle from 18 to 21, conducting more active shooter drills, and toughening background checks with mental health screenings." The [Palm Beach \(FL\) Post](#) (2/21, Dupree) says Trump "listened quietly as students and parents told their stories and made their requests," and [Bloomberg News](#) (2/21, Epstein, Sink) says he "mostly listened" during the "passionate" meeting. As "students who lost friends in shootings and parents who lost children told the president their personal stories in unsparring detail," he sat with "his hands pressed against each other in front of him, grim-faced, often nodding."

[Politico](#) (2/21, Lima) reports that Trump "vowed to take action in response to the Florida high school shooting," saying his Administration will be "very strong" on background checks for gun sales and on mental health. Trump said, "It's not going to be talk like it has been in the past. ... It's been going on too long, too many instances, and we're going to get it done. ... We're going to be very strong on background checks. We'll be doing very strong background checks, very strong emphasis on the mental health of somebody."

[Breitbart](#) (2/21, Spiering) says several students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, where last week's attack occurred, were in attendance along with their parents. Stoneman Douglas senior class president Julia Cordover "thanked Trump for moving to ban 'bump stocks' calling it a 'step in the right direction.'" Others "even praised Trump's leadership."

Eamon Javers said on [CNBC's Closing Bell](#) (2/21), "The political needle here at the White House is moving a little bit in terms of what the President might accept in terms of gun control. I talked to a White House official earlier today who told me that the White House is open to considering a new approach to gun control, one in which the President would accept the blocking of sales of all guns for certain categories of individuals, particularly those in and around the mental health area. They described that as different than the previous approach pitched by Democrats, which was to ban sales of certain guns to everyone, like the AR-15 or assault weapons in general."

Sen. Richard Blumenthal said, also on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/21), "What has to happen is for the President to break with the NRA and support not only strengthening the existing information that goes into the background check system, but also extending those background checks to all purchases. Not just bump stocks and proposing regulations, which could well be struck down by the courts, but backing legislation that will prohibit those bump stocks. As well, banning assault weapons. They are simply weapons of war that are designed to kill and maim people, as we've seen in all of these mass shootings, enabled to be even more lethal by high-capacity magazines holding 20 or 30 rounds. So these kinds of measures are what the President needs to support. Not just with talk, but with real action."

A pair of major newspaper editorials are also pessimistic about the likelihood that any change will occur. In an editorial, [USA Today](#) (2/21) cites "history and Trump's comments about arming teachers," and says "the odds against change are high," but argues that "lives depend upon beating those odds." A [Washington Post](#) (2/21) editorial questions Trump's sincerity "when he says he has been deeply affected by recent events and wants to bring about change," arguing that his approach to banning bump stocks "raises questions about just how serious he is." Instead of a regulation as Trump has ordered, the Post argues he should back legislation sponsored by Sen. Dianne Feinstein "that would bar them, along with other devices that have been created to circumvent the intent of federal gun laws." Citing Trump's expressed "interest in legislation that would strengthen the system of national background checks as well as raise the minimum age for purchase of certain weapons," the Post calls on Congress to "take his cue and pursue measures, including pending legislation on background checks, that would enact these small reforms."

***Commentators Criticize Trump's Openness To Arming Teachers.*** The President's discussion of

arming teachers is cast in an unfavorable light. Jeffrey Toobin said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/21), "When you hear the President of the United States say the answer is to give every teacher in America a gun, that is insane. That is an insane idea. . . . Just what kind of country do we live in when we're talking about giving every teacher in America a gun. And that's a solution to this problem?"

[The Hill](#) (2/21, Manchester) reports in its "Blog Briefing Room" blog that Trump "floated the idea of arming teachers in an effort to prevent future school shootings," and "surveyed the room, asking how attendees felt about the idea," saying, "So does anybody like that idea here, does anybody like it? . . . Do people feel strongly against it, anybody? Anybody? Strongly against it? We can understand both sides. Certainly, it's controversial, but we'll study that along with many other ideas."

Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA) [tweeted](#), "Mr. President, if you ask them, most students and parents don't want more guns in schools. Most teachers don't want to be armed guards, they want to teach. Most principals don't want schools to be shooting galleries, they want them to be schools. The answer is not more guns."

Jenna Johnson of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), "Trump listened intently as students, parents and teachers shared ideas for preventing school shootings. But he remained focused on the solution he often proposes after a mass shooting: increasing the number of people with guns."

Trump also "slammed gun free zones," [Townhall](#) (2/21, Pavlich) reports. Trump said, "A gun-free zone to a maniac, because they're all cowards, a gun-free zone is 'let's go in and let's attack because bullets aren't coming back at us.' . . . If you had a teacher who was adept at firearms, they could very well end the attack very quickly. . . . I really believe that if these cowards knew the school was well guarded by professionals with great training, I don't think they'd go into the school to start off with."

While [Reuters](#) (2/21, Rampton, Mason) reports that Trump "said he would move quickly to tighten background checks for gun buyers and would consider raising the age for buying certain types of guns," its report focuses heavily on Trump's discussion of arming teachers, saying he "voic[ed] support for an idea backed by the National Rifle Association gun rights group."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/21, Nelson) also focuses on Trump's discussion of arming teachers, reporting that he "said armed teachers could end a shooting earlier than first-responders, who sometimes arrive after the gunman is finished." The Examiner adds, however, that when Trump polled the room, he "acknowledged mixed views on arming teachers." Mark Barden, whose child was murdered at Sandy Hook, spoke against the idea, arguing that a would-be mass murderer "is not going to care if there's someone there with a gun" at the school. [The Hill](#) (2/21, Carter) reports that a 2016 [tweet](#) from Trump in which he denied wanting guns "brought into the school classroom" has come to light after his comments about arming teachers. In the tweet, Trump had attacked Hillary Clinton for saying she "want[s] guns brought into the school classroom," calling her "wrong."

**Pollack's Remarks Galvanize Media Attention.** A number of reports highlight Andrew Pollack's words during the White House session. The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Davis), for example, reports that Pollack, whose daughter was killed in last week's shooting in Florida, "made an impassioned plea" to Trump "to act quickly to protect children in the country's schools." Pollack, "venting raw anger and grief," said, "It should have been one school shooting, and we should have fixed it." Pollack "said he did not favor adopting new gun restrictions, but pleaded for Democrats and Republicans to come together to create new school safety measures."

Dana Bash said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/21), "At the beginning, it was really unclear how it was going to go. But then once Mr. Pollack stood up and talked about the fact that he had three sons there and he would have to visit his daughter at the cemetery from now on, it was just extraordinary. And the fact that he is expressing his anger, understandable anger, in the White House with the President listening is amazing. It is a moment, frankly, I think for the history books." Bash added that "as much as sort of intellectually all of us who have covered these horrible events over and over again have seen the call for doing something and then for that to subside quickly...in my gut, and maybe I'm just being overly optimistic because I feel like we all need to be, this does feel different."

**Candid Photo Captures Trump's "Crib Notes" For The Meeting.** The [New York Post](#) (2/21, Brown) reports that Trump had "crib notes" for the session that "included the suggested phrases 'I hear you,' and 'What can we do to help you feel safe?'" Also among the suggested talking points, captured in a candid photo of Trump's palm cards, was the question, "What would you most want me to know about your experience?" The notes were widely criticized [on Twitter](#),



where House Minority Leader Pelosi [wrote](#), “I hear you, @realDonaldTrump? And yet, you and Republican leaders do absolutely nothing.”

**NYTimes Analysis: NRA TV Exemplifies Group’s “Tone” Under Trump.** The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Peters) reports that while NRA leaders “kept quiet after the school shooting last week,” a “furious debate played out on NRA TV, the organization’s online video channel.” The channel’s hosts “spoke chillingly of leftist plots to confiscate weapons, media conspiracies to brainwash Americans into supporting gun control and a ‘deep state’ campaign to undermine...Trump.” NRA critics say there has been “a shift in the organization’s tone since Mr. Trump was elected that is much more pugilistic, and that NRA TV is where the most outrageous commentary occurs.” They say the change “seems to reflect the fact that like many organizations on the right, the N.R.A. believes it has to guard against complacency among its members with a friendly president in the White House.”

**Security Officer Overhears Threat, Thwarts High School Attack In California.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/21, Horton) reports that authorities say “an alert security officer at a Southern California high school helped thwart a potential shooting Friday.” El Camino High School security officer Marino Chavez told a news conference that he “overheard a 17-year-old student say he was going to launch an attack within three weeks.” He said he “stopped and questioned the student, who claimed it was a joke,” but Los Angeles County Sheriff’s investigators “detained the student and issued a search warrant of his home,” seizing “two AR-15 rifles and two handguns, along with about 90 rifle magazines each capable of holding 30 rounds, though they could not say how many were loaded at the time.” An AR-15 was used by the gunman in Parkland, Fla.

**Threats Disrupt Classes At Two Florida Schools.** The [Sarasota \(FL\) Herald-Tribune](#) (2/21) reports that threats at two Manatee County, Florida schools “disrupted classes Wednesday.” Manatee High School was in “shelter in place” status following a Snapchat post made outside campus that the Bradenton Police Department deemed to be threatening in nature. Earlier in the day, a lockdown at Southeast High School was lifted just after noon. The campus was put on lockdown after a “message was found written on a restroom wall Wednesday morning. The school was put on lockdown while deputies investigated.”

**Armed Principal Who Detained Campus Gunman Opposes Arming Teachers.** The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Saul) reports that Joel Myrick, the former assistant principal at a high school in Mississippi, who “survived a school shooting – after loading his Colt .45 pistol, then chasing and detaining the suspect at gunpoint – says the idea is misguided.” Said Myrick, “Teachers have to teach, and that’s what they should be doing. ... It doesn’t matter what a pistolero you are, or think you are, you don’t need to be in school in charge of protecting children.”

**Social Media Threat Prompts School Lockdown In Minnesota.** The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (2/21, Pheifer) reports that social media posts threatening a school shooting prompted students and staff in Orono public schools in Minnesota “to barricade doors with chairs, metal cabinets and desks Wednesday,” while “outside the four-school campus, snowplows and police cars blocked access to roads leading to the schools.” According to Police Chief Correy Farinok, police “were notified at 10:57 a.m. of threats on Twitter and Facebook that a shooting would happen at noon.” Farinok said that “a male student was arrested about 4:15 p.m. pending felony charges of terroristic threats,” and a second male student is a “person of interest,” but has not been arrested.

**Colorado Democrats Defeat Columbine Survivor’s Bill To Allow Concealed Carry In Schools.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/21, Richardson) reports that Colorado Democrats on Wednesday defeated a measure “to remove restrictions on concealed-carry in K-12 public schools.” The bill, which was introduced by House Minority Leader Patrick Neville, a sophomore at Columbine High School during the 1999 massacre, was defeated “on a 6-3 party-line vote after six hours of testimony before the House State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee.”

**Tenney: Many Mass Shooters End Up Being Democrats.** [The Hill](#) (2/21, Anapol) reports that in an interview with radio host Fred Dicker on Wednesday, Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-NY) said that many mass shooters “end up being Democrats.” Tenney claimed, “Obviously there’s a lot of politics in it. ... And it’s interesting that so many of these people that commit the mass murders end up being Democrats, but the media doesn’t talk about that either.” Her Democratic challenger, Anthony Brindisi, “fired back on Twitter, calling on Tenney to apologize for the comments.” Brindisi wrote, “This toxic rhetoric is shameful and a new low even for Ms. Tenney. ... Inserting politics into a national tragedy is beyond the pale & disgusting. She should apologize now to spare our region any more national embarrassment.”

Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) [tweeted](#), “Rep. Tenney owes America a sincere and abject apology.”

*As Democrats Seek House Majority, Candidates' Gun Stances "Not A Litmus Test."* The [Washington Post](#) (2/21, Kane) reports that on the issue of gun-control, Democrats seem "to have Republicans on the defensive following their slow-moving response to the massacre of 17 at a Florida high school on Feb. 14." However, some Democratic congressional hopefuls have "mixed views on the issue." For example, ex-federal prosecutor Conor Lamb, running in the closely watched PA13 special election, "likes guns and does not believe in banning any weapons, even the type of 'military-style' weapon used in Florida last week." After highlighting that the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is backing candidates in Kansas and New Jersey that have strong ratings from the NRA, the Post adds that in their bid "to reclaim the House majority, Democrats feel they need to win in some of these rural districts for total victory, so gun positions are not a litmus test."

McClatchy's Alex Roarty [tweeted](#), "Watched Conor Lamb answer about 45 minutes of questions from high schoolers this afternoon. About the first 25 minutes were spent exclusively asking about guns and mental health, if you wanted to gauge how the Florida shooting has affected the psyche of students many places."

*Milbank: Pro-Lifers Who Support Gun Culture Aren't Truly Pro-Life.* In his [Washington Post](#) (2/21) column, Dana Milbank criticizes Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas for "claiming to be 'pro-life' while his advocacy of unlimited gun rights expands a culture of death." Milbank writes that "the 'sanctity of life' argument is more compelling for gun control: There is no moral consensus on abortion, but there is a moral consensus on wanton killing." It is, he argues, "no stretch to say that those who accept the routine mass murder of innocents are not truly pro-life."

### **CNN Holds Town Hall With Florida Shooting Survivors.**

☐ [CNN](#) (2/21) hosted an hour-long town hall meeting Wednesday night with survivors of last week's shooting and the families of victims. In his opening remarks, moderator Jake Tapper said, "We should note President Trump declined an invitation to be here tonight either in person or from the White House, as did Florida Gov. Rick Scott who declined to be here in person or from Tallahassee."

Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL) said in the ☐ [CNN](#) (2/21) town hall, "A lot of people have told this community, people from all around the world, that it's too soon, it's too soon to get together to have this kind of forum. It's too soon to talk about preventing another tragedy like the one that struck our community from happening anywhere again. It's too soon to talk about getting weapons of war out of our communities. It is not too soon. It is too late for the 17 lives that were lost. It is too late for the grieving families, too late for the injured, too late for the 3,300 survivors of what happened. ... The folks in our community don't want words. They don't want thoughts and prayers. They don't want discussions. They want action. And we owe it to them to provide it."

Sen. Bill Nelson said in the ☐ [CNN](#) (2/21) town hall, "There ought to be some common sense solutions like getting the assault rifles off the streets. Another common sense solution having criminal background checks on every acquiring of a gun."

During the ☐ [CNN](#) (2/21) town hall, Sen. Marco Rubio faced tough questioning from a father who lost his 14-year-old daughter in last week's shooting, who said, "Your comments this week and those of our President have been pathetically weak." Rubio said, "I absolutely believe that in this country, if you are 18 years of age you should not be able to buy a rifle. I will support a law that takes that right away. I will support the banning of bump stocks. I know the President has ordered the Attorney General to do it and if he doesn't, we should do it by law. I will support changing our background system so that it includes more information than it includes now. And that all states across the country are required or incentivized to report all the information into it." On the issue of an assault weapons ban, Rubio said, "If I believed that that law would have prevented this from happening, I would support it."

[USA Today](#) (2/21, James) reports that Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel told the audience "that elected officials will have to make decisions that keep the community safe or 'they are not going to hold office.'"

### **Students March On Florida State Capitol To Demand Action On Gun Control.**

Kerry Sanders reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) ☐ (2/21, story 2, 2:20, Guthrie) that 100 survivors of the Stoneman Douglas shooting were joined by "thousands of other students...marching on the Florida capitol, demanding lawmakers restrict the sale of assault weapons." Dan Harris reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) ☐ (2/21, story 2, 3:15, Muir) that the students' "initial optimism curdled into frustration as they complained about what they viewed as a lack of straight answers from lawmakers." Under the headline, "Florida Students Began With Optimism. Then They Spoke

To Lawmakers," the [New York Times](#) (2/21, Turkewitz) reports on the students' efforts to lobby Florida lawmakers. The [Miami Herald](#) (2/21, Klas, Koh) says the students "got a real-life lesson in the perils of high expectations" as they "met with state legislators to discuss their promise of stricter gun laws and left disappointed that the progress that appeared likely would only be incremental."

Adriana Diaz said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/21, story 2, 1:15, Glor) that the students "end[ed] the day by meeting with Republican Gov. Rick Scott. Now, bipartisan legislation is in the works that would raise the minimum age for buying an assault weapon to 21 and provide more funding for mental health in schools. That could be introduced as early as tomorrow." The [Tampa \(FL\) Tribune](#) (2/21, Klas, Koh) also reports on the students' efforts in Tallahassee.

The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Burns) reports that in the wake of last week's shooting, Florida Republicans, "who dominate government in the state, are facing pressure unlike any they have experienced before to pass legislation addressing gun violence." With roughly two weeks left in the legislative session, Republicans "have concluded that it would be catastrophic to wrap up without doing something to address the mounting outcry. The debate now is over what counts as doing enough." The Times adds that "Gov. Rick Scott and the leaders of the Florida House and Senate, appear set on pursuing a far narrower resolution – a package of incremental measures that would improve certain background checks and bolster mental health services and school security, while stopping well short of the clampdown sought by survivors of the massacre."

Rep. Tim Walz (D-MN) [tweeted](#), "From my years spent teaching high school geography & supervising the cafeteria, I know that when #StudentsDemandAction, their voices can be powerful. They know that to prevent gun violence, we have to act. Our students are our future. We would be wise to listen to them."

Shane Goldmacher of the New York Times [tweeted](#), "One subtle but powerful thing about the students who've mobilized after Parkland: We are hearing the names of survivors and victims far more than the shooter." Dan Rather [tweeted](#), "The voice of a child is often a clarion call to action. In their purity lies passion and courage. They are our future. And when they roar, they will be heard and shake the political status quo of our nation."

***Students Stage School Walkouts Nationwide.*** The [AP](#) (2/21) says walk outs "took place Wednesday at schools from Maine to Arizona. Some lasted 17 minutes in honor of the 17 people killed one week earlier at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland." At many of the protests, students "called for stronger gun control and said they're taking action to protect schools because Congress hasn't."

***"Seasoned Left-Wing Activists" Aiding Students' Anti-Gun Movement.*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/21, Richardson) reports that "seasoned left-wing activists" are assisting the students who are "billed as leading the gun control charge 'from their parents' living rooms.'" Women's March LA Foundation co-executive director Deena Katz "submitted the application for a National Park Service permit for the March for Our Lives, the March 24 rally on the National Mall described as a student-led protest." In Denver, "the Colorado Coalition Against Gun Violence applied for a permit for its March 24 rally at the state capitol, according to a state spokesman, while Moms Demand Action, backed by billionaire and former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, has jumped in even as it tries to keep the spotlight on the teens."

***Accused Shooter's Attorney Seeks To Avoid Death Penalty For His Client.*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/21, Campo-Flores) reports that accused Florida gunman Nikolas Cruz's attorney has said that Cruz is prepared to plead guilty if prosecutors take the death penalty and accept a sentence of life without the possibility of parole. In a news release over the weekend, State Attorney Michael Satz said an announcement would be made "at the appropriate time" but "this certainly is the type of case the death penalty was designed for."

***Broward Sheriff Defends His Office's Response To School Shooting.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Blinder, Mazzei, Oppel) reports that Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel "on Wednesday defended his office's response" to last week's shooting "amid questions over whether some of his deputies hung back instead of pursuing the gunman accused of killing 17 people." Israel "said that, to his knowledge, deputies followed protocol and did not wait for specialized teams to arrive before" entering the school, but "details over the office's response remained unclear." The [Miami Herald](#) (2/21, Rabin, Ovalle) reports that Israel announced Wednesday "that deputies assigned to school campuses will now be allowed to carry rifles on school grounds." Israel told reporters, "Rifles from this point forward. ... We need to be able to defeat any threat on campus."

***Conspiracy Theory Claims Shooting Survivor Is A "Crisis Actor."*** [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/21, story 3, 1:45, Guthrie) reported on a "disturbing conspiracy theory" about the Stoneman Douglas students who are speaking out, which is "gaining some traction online." NBC (Kent) added that



on social media, “right-wing conspiracy theories” hold that David Hogg, a 17-year-old shooting survivor, is “a crisis actor, trained actor that takes advantage of tragedies for political gain.” The conspiracy “went viral on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube” and the President’s son Donald Trump Jr. “liked two tweets.” The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/21, story 3, 2:25, Bojorquez) reported, “YouTube said in a statement that it had removed one of the conspiracy videos from its ‘trending’ section. Facebook also said it will remove any content attacking the victims.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Herrman) reports that the video featuring Hogg was briefly the No. 1 trending video on YouTube Wednesday. The video, which was “originally posted last August, was a brief local news segment” in which “Hogg was interviewed by the CBS affiliate in Los Angeles after witnessing a dispute between a lifeguard and a swimmer at Redondo Beach.” A YouTube user “copied and re-uploaded the video with a new caption: ‘DAVID HOGG THE ACTOR....’”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/21, Timberg, Dwoskin, Ohlheiser, Tran) reports that Hogg “was not the only one targeted by an online campaign that flared up on anonymous forums such as 4chan and Reddit before it reached conservative websites, Twitter, Facebook and Google’s video platform.” The posts “questioned the honesty and credibility of the grieving students as they spoke out against gun violence and in some cases publicly challenged President Trump, the National Rifle Association and lawmakers opposed to gun control.”

Margaret Sullivan writes in the [Washington Post](#) (2/21) that the “sliming” of the students is “beyond the pale.” Sullivan argues, “Legitimate disagreement over policy issues is one thing. Lies, conspiracy theories and insults are quite another.”

CNN’s MJ Lee [tweeted](#), “Can we just digest this? TMZ is doing investigative journalism to debunk a conspiracy theory about a high school student who survived a shooting. This is 2018.”

*D’Souza Apologizes For Mocking Shooting Survivors.* The [Washington Times](#) (2/21, Chasmar) reports that after “a wave of backlash for mocking an emotional photo of” shooting survivors, conservative commentator and documentarian Dinesh D’Souza has apologized. D’Souza “received tens of thousands of angry responses from Twitter users on both sides of the aisle after he” responded to an AP photo of students crying after the Florida House voted down a motion to take up a ban on assault weapons, writing, “Worst news since their parents told them to get summer jobs.” An earlier D’Souza tweet reacting to the vote said, “Adults 1, kids 0.” In addition, D’Souza “slammed ‘politically orchestrated grief’ and the liberal media for exploiting the Parkland shooting that took 17 lives on Valentine’s Day.”

D’Souza [tweeted](#), “While it aimed at media manipulation, my tweet was insensitive to students who lost friends in a terrible tragedy. I’m truly sorry.”

### **White House: Trump Agenda Could Lead To 3% Annual Growth Through Next Decade.**

The [AP](#) (2/21, Thomas, Rugaber) reports the Council of Economic Advisers “said Wednesday the US could achieve annual growth rates of 3 percent through the next decade if President Donald Trump’s policies on regulations and infrastructure are enacted.” The CEA report “forecasts an overall average annual growth rate of 2.2 percent through 2028,” but argues that “with the ‘full implementation of the Administration’s agenda,’ including the implementation of the tax law, additional cuts to regulation and a sweeping infrastructure plan, the projected growth rate reaches 3 percent through the next decade, said the report.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/21, Miller) reports the White House also “forecast that the labor market would continue to strengthen in the near term, with the unemployment rate falling to 3.7 percent in 2019 from the current 4.4 percent.”

The CEA report, says the [Washington Post](#) (2/21, Long), refers to “Trump’s policies...driving an economic turnaround that puts him in the company of transformative presidents such as John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan.” The Post describes the report as “a highly optimistic view of the economy’s current condition and future course, with growth predictions that exceed most nonpartisan economists’ expectations.” In fact, “economists...caution the White House’s efforts to juice growth could cause the economy to overheat and then careen into a downturn.”

*Hannity Praises Trump’s Economic Accomplishments As Historic.* Broadcasting from CPAC, Sean Hannity said on [Fox News’ Hannity](#) (2/21) that President Trump “has a lot of accomplishments to talk about. ... Under President Trump – this is one year – unemployment in America 17-year low. African-American, Hispanic unemployment have also reached record lows now under one year of...Trump. Jobless claims are at a 45-year low and since the election, 2.5 million new jobs have been created and there are two million fewer Americans on food stamps in the country.” Consumer confidence is at a “near 17-year high. Business confidence has now reached levels not seen since President Reagan. All of that is before the President’s historic tax

cuts have even started to kick in.” Hannity listed a range of other accomplishments and argued, “If a Democrat had accomplished half of what President Trump has at this point in their presidency, the liberal media would be trying to put this individual on Mount Rushmore.”

***Rabine: Small Businesses “Booming” With Tax Cuts.*** Rabine Group CEO and Founder Gary Rabine writes in [USA Today](#) (2/21) that “big businesses are receiving uncommonly excellent press lately,” in large part because “dozens of major American employers are giving their employees significant pay raises or bonuses because of the new tax law that lowered the corporate tax rate from 35% to 21%.” Rabine adds, “Don’t forget about small businesses, which under the new law receive a 20% tax deduction and the ability to immediately expense their business investments.” Small business investments from tax reform “may not generate headlines, but they are also giving pay increases to their employees and expanding their businesses as a result of the new tax law.” He concludes that “the combination of small business and corporate tax cuts has created small business optimism like we haven’t seen in more than a decade.”

***Fed Officials: Stronger Economy Setting Stage For Higher Interest Rates.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Appelbaum) reports, “Robust economic growth has increased the confidence of Federal Reserve officials that the economy is ready for higher interest rates, according to an official account of the Fed’s most recent policymaking meeting in January.” The Fed “cited the strength of recent economic data, accommodative financial conditions and the impact of a major tax cut that took effect in January, which it said might deliver a larger-than-expected increase in near-term economic growth.”

[Reuters](#) (2/21, Dunsmuir, Lange) similarly reports that “the more upbeat take on inflation in the minutes of the Jan. 30-31 policy meeting released on Wednesday will likely further cement expectations that new Fed chief Jerome Powell will lead his colleagues in raising interest rates next month.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/21, A1, Timiraos) runs a similar front-page report under the headline “Fed Gives Bullish Signals Of Economy.”

***Stocks Finish Lower After Fed Hints At Rate Hikes.*** [Reuters](#) (2/21, Mikolajczak) reports “stocks closed lower on Wednesday in a rocky session after the release of the minutes from the Federal Reserve’s January meeting,” which “showed the US central bank’s rate-setting committee grew more confident in the need to keep raising rates, with most believing inflation would perk up amid an improving economic landscape.” Reuters adds that “the Dow Jones Industrial Average .DJI fell 166.97 points, or 0.67 percent, to 24,797.78, the S&P 500 .SPX lost 14.93 points, or 0.55 percent, to 2,701.33 and the Nasdaq Composite .IXIC dropped 16.08 points, or 0.22 percent, to 7,218.23.”

***Samuelson: Internet Is The Greatest Threat To US Economy.*** Columnist Robert J. Samuelson opines in the [Washington Post](#) (2/21) that the Internet “poses the greatest threat to the US economy” because, if it is used against us through cyberattacks and hacking, it could possibly shut most of the economy down. Samuelson cites “the annual report of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, which devotes a whole chapter to the dangers of a hostile Internet,” to support this argument. Samuelson questions the self-restraint of countries with advanced cyberweapons to continue to refrain from deploying “them fully against critical infrastructure for fear of retaliation.”

### **Fox Analysis: Trump Infrastructure Plan Will Seek To Cut Through Red Tape.**

Bret Baier reported on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/21) that President Trump’s “massive infrastructure plan could result in significant cutting of federal red tape.” Doug McKelway added that the Administration is trying to cut through “red tape as it proposes a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure program.” Following his inauguration, Trump “signed a memorandum to begin streamlining,” and “in subsequent memoranda, the White House promised to establish a one-agency, one-division structure for environmental review, shorten the length of the environmental review process to two years, and eliminate redundant provisions in environmental law.” Trump’s “plan also gives more power to the states, who have learned they need to make permitting easier to be competitive.” McKelway added, however, that Trump’s infrastructure promises “will be hard to keep. After he gave the go-ahead to complete the Keystone XL pipeline a year ago, it remains unfinished, and environmentalists filed a new lawsuit this week to block it.”

***Inhofe, Whitehouse Urge Congress To Reach Bipartisan Agreement.*** In a [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/21) op-ed, Sens. James Inhofe (R-OK) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) – members of the Senate Environment Committee – urge Congress to come together on bipartisan package of infrastructure proposals, saying that doing so will improve the nation’s roads and coastal structures, while likely boosting the US economy.

### **North Carolina Regulator Considered For Trump's Top Environmental Adviser.**

The [New York Times](#) (2/21, Friedman) reports that Administration is "considering a North Carolina regulator who questions mainstream climate science to be the next White House environmental adviser, just weeks after withdrawing a previous nominee who held similar views." Donald van der Vaart, the former secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, said in a telephone interview "that he had been in discussions with the White House for several positions in recent months, most recently to possibly lead the Council on Environmental Quality." In the interview, van der Vaart also "expressed skepticism about the extent to which humans have contributed to climate change."

### **Mayors Send Letter In Opposition Against Trump Reversal Of Obama-era Climate Plan.**

[The Hill](#) (2/21, Bowden) reports "hundreds of mayors representing cities in 47 states and territories have signed a letter" in opposition to the Trump Administration's "move to roll back the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan." In a letter to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt, "236 U.S. mayors wrote that the Trump administration's attempt to roll back the environmental restrictions would have 'devastating health and economic impacts on their communities.'" The letter said, "We strongly oppose the proposed repeal of the Clean Power Plan, which would put our citizens at risk and harm our efforts to address the urgent threat of climate change."

### **New Jersey Joins Coalition Supporting Paris Climate Change Pact.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/21, Siegel) reports New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy yesterday "signed a bill joining a coalition of states committed" to reducing "emissions of carbon dioxide to fulfill the United States' pledge under the Paris international climate change agreement." The governor's move "requires New Jersey to join the U.S. Climate Alliance, a coalition of 15 other states and Puerto Rico vowing to uphold the Paris Agreement. Both chambers of the state legislature passed a bill to put New Jersey in the alliance."

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

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### **New York Times.**

*"Who Has Innocent Syrians' Blood On Their Hands?"* The [New York Times](#) (2/21) editorializes that a legal case should be built to try Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad for war crimes. The editors also criticize world powers for "largely stand[ing] by," including as Assad has continued to deploy chemical weapons in violation of international law, and says President Trump "has effectively abandoned America's international leadership role in the matter." The article also criticizes aid and humanitarian organizations for not calling for stronger action.

*"Trump Tries To Kill ObamaCare By A Thousand Cuts."* In an editorial headlined "Trump Tries To Kill Obamacare By A Thousand Cuts," the [New York Times](#) (2/21) writes that "having failed in its effort to have Congress repeal the Affordable Care Act, the Trump administration has been relentlessly trying to destroy the health care law on its own." Its "latest move in that demolition derby came this week, when officials proposed giving insurance companies more leeway to sell junk health plans." The Times argues that if the Administration "were actually serious about reducing health care costs, it would try to improve the A.C.A., not dismantle it." However, it seems "unwilling to pursue constructive health care policies because they are obsessed with undoing Obamacare."

### **Washington Post.**

*"Are You Serious About Gun Control Mr. Trump? Prove It."* A [Washington Post](#) (2/21) editorial questions President Trump's sincerity "when he says he has been deeply affected by recent events and wants to bring about change," arguing that his approach to banning bump stocks "raises questions about just how serious he is." Instead of a regulation as Trump has ordered, the Post argues "he should back legislation sponsored by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) that would bar them, along with other devices that have been created to circumvent the intent of federal gun laws." Citing Trump's expressed "interest in legislation that would strengthen the system of national background checks as well as raise the minimum age for purchase of certain weapons," the Post calls on Congress to "take his cue and pursue measures, including pending legislation on background checks, that would enact these small reforms."

*"Some Virginia Republicans Finally Have An Epiphany On Medicaid."* In an editorial, the

[Washington Post](#) (2/21, Board) says that by “refusing to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act for the past several years, Virginia Republicans seemed intent on sticking it to President Barack Obama and then-Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D).” However, they “stuck it to themselves, losing 15 seats in this past fall’s elections for the House of Delegates, in most cases to Democrats who promised to expand Medicaid.” The Post says “that message has now been received by some Republicans in Richmond, but not all.” While a “wave of new thinking has prompted Republicans [in the state House] to back a draft budget that would expand Medicaid to cover an estimated 300,000 Virginians,” state Senate Republicans “seem convinced that they can continue to spurn billions in federal funding and let indigent Virginians suffer the consequences.” The Post urges them to reconsider.

*“Billy Graham, An Evangelist With An ‘Invincible Innocence.’”* In an editorial this morning, the [Washington Post](#) (2/21) lavishes praise on Rev. Billy Graham, and highlights the fact that he “was never a great hero of the political left or right, though he took a stand fairly early in this country’s civil rights movement against segregation, and spoke often, if somewhat vaguely, on the need for social justice.”

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*“Iran’s Syrian Front.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/21) editorializes that Iran is the driving political power behind the Assad government’s commitment of atrocities in Syria. The Journal argues that Iran is seeking to establish a more permanent presence in Syria as part of its growing Shiite-Persian empire, and Russia is failing to block it. The Journal also criticizes the Trump Administration for not acting more urgently to counter the threat, asserting that this makes an Iran-Israel conflict increasingly likely.

*“Billy Graham.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/21) editorializes on Rev. Billy Graham’s impact on the country and the world, and praises his impact on the image of Evangelicals – and the fact that he treated Catholics just as he did other Christian denominations.

*“Thomas Vs. Sotomayor.”* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/21) editorializes that Justice Clarence Thomas’ concurrence in a Supreme Court case involving an incorrect reinterpretation of the Dodd-Frank Act is evidence that he wants the Supreme Court to follow the actual letter of the law, while Justice Sonia Sotomayor would prefer to drive her political preferences through consideration of congressional intent in writing laws. Thomas’ concurrence was in response to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who wrote for the Court but factored congressional intent into her writing, which Thomas disagreed with. The Journal is complimentary of Thomas’ writing and his apparent desire to observe the plain text of laws.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### ***Wall Street Journal:***

[Fed Gives Bullish Signals On Economy](#)

[Saudi Arabia Stymies US Over Pakistan Terror List](#)

[How Jeffrey Immelt’s “Success Theater” Masked The Rot At GE](#)

[Amazon Is Taking Over The Stock Market, Too](#)

#### ***New York Times:***

[Poland’s Nationalism Threatens Europe’s Values, And Cohesion](#)

[Trump’s Republican Critics Find A Sudden Need For His Support](#)

[Grieving Father Presses Trump: “How Many Children Have To Get Shot?”](#)

[Florida G.O.P. Faces Growing Pressure To Act On Gun Control](#)

[Billy Graham Dies; Media-Savvy Pastor Advised Presidents](#)

[An Envoy Who Can Rival ‘North Korea’s Ivanka’](#)

#### ***Washington Post:***

[On No-Holds-Barred Internet, Conspiracies Are Tough To Contain](#)

[Off-Duty Md. Officer Shot Dead Near Home](#)

[Protests Stir Fla. Debate On Guns](#)

[“Fix It”: Students, Parents Plead With Trump For Action To Stop Shootings](#)

[Trump In-Laws Likely Aided By “Chain Migration”](#)

[Evangelist Spread Gospel To World's Poor And Powerful](#)

**Financial Times:**

[May Braced For Unilever Decision On Headquarters](#)  
[US Proposes Overhaul Of "Too Big To Fail" Regime](#)

**Washington Times:**

[FBI's Stonewalling On Nunes Memo Underscores Bureau's Commitment To Protecting Image](#)  
[Europeans Rip Trump On Climate Change, Import Record Amounts Of US Coal](#)  
[The Rev. Billy Graham, Spiritual Adviser To Presidents, Dies At 99](#)  
[Trump Expresses Support For Arming Teachers In "Listening Session"](#)  
[Tea Party Pushed To Trump's Shadow At CPAC](#)  
[Middle East Military Heavyweights Israel, Iran On Collision Course Over Syria](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-Student Protest; Billy Graham Dies; Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Mexico-Ferryboat Explosion; California School Plot Foiled; Debate Moderator; Billy Graham Tribute.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting-WH; Florida School Shooting-Student Protest; Florida School Shooting-Conspiracy Theory; Syrian Civil War; Mexico-Ferryboat Explosion; Billy Graham Dies; Severe Weather; ISIS-Terror Plot; Nasal Spray Mist; Winter Olympic News; Tiger Smuggling; Billy Graham Tribute.

**NBC:** Florida School Shooting-WH; Florida School Shooting-Student Protest; Florida School Shooting-Conspiracy Theory; Billy Graham Dies; Syrian Civil War; Winter Olympic News; Peanut Allergy Research; Severe Weather; Nasal Spray Mist; Mexico-Ferryboat Explosion; Winter Olympic Rivalry.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida School Shooting – 24 minutes, 35 seconds

Billy Graham Dies – 8 minutes, 30 seconds

Severe Weather – 2 minutes, 25 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Montenegro-US Embassy Alert; Florida School Shooting; California School Attack Foiled; Virginia Train Crash Investigation; Winter Olympic News.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Billy Graham Dies; Severe Weather; Winter Olympics News; Montenegro-US Embassy Alert; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Florida School Shooting; California School Attack Foiled.

**NPR:** Florida School Shooting; Ford CEO Resignation.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with State and local officials on school safety.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Speaks at Conservative Political Action Conference.

**US Senate:** 3:30 PM Helsinki Commission briefing on Russian sports doping – 'The Russian Doping Scandal: Protecting Whistleblowers and Combating Fraud in Sports' Helsinki Commission briefing, with Jim Walden, attorney to Russian whistleblower Dr Grigory Rodchenkov, in conversation on combating fraud in sports and the role of whistleblowers in safeguarding the integrity of international competitions, including discussing the Oscar-nominated documentary 'Icarus' Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC-203, Washington, DC <http://www.csce.gov> <https://twitter.com/HelsinkiComm>

On recess until 26 Feb.

**US House:** 3:30 PM Helsinki Commission briefing on Russian sports doping – 'The Russian Doping Scandal: Protecting Whistleblowers and Combating Fraud in Sports' Helsinki Commission briefing, with Jim Walden, attorney to Russian whistleblower Dr Grigory Rodchenkov, in conversation on combating fraud in sports and the role of whistleblowers in safeguarding the integrity of international competitions, including discussing the Oscar-nominated documentary 'Icarus' Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC-203, Washington, DC <http://www.csce.gov>



<https://twitter.com/HelsinkiComm>

On recess until 26 Feb.

**Other:** 9:00 AM Brookings discussion on the U.S.-Japan alliance – ‘The U.S.-Japan alliance and the problem of deterrence’ Brookings Institution Center for East Asia Policy Studies public event examining U.S. extended deterrence in Japan and Asia, with discussion on views of deterrence in each country and the implications of those mainstream views for addressing current and future security challenges from North Korea and China. Panelists include International University of Japan Professor Lt. Gen. (Ret) Noburo Yamaguchi, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for International Studies Principal Research Scientist Eric Heginbotham, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy M. Elaine Bunn, and National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies Professor Narushige Michishita Location: The Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.brookings.edu>

<https://twitter.com/BrookingsInst> 10:30 AM Attorney General Sessions, Law Enforcement Officials Announce Significant Law Enforcement Action – Attorney General Jeff Sessions and other law enforcement officials will hold a press conference to announce a significant law enforcement action. This event will be LIVESTREAMED at [justice.gov/live](https://www.justice.gov/live) All media must RSVP no later than 10:00 a.m. EST and present government-issued photo I.D. (such as a driver’s license) as well as valid media credentials. The RSVP and any inquiries regarding logistics should be directed to Sarah Sutton at [sarah.e.sutton@usdoj.gov](mailto:sarah.e.sutton@usdoj.gov) and the Office of Public Affairs at [press@usdoj.gov](mailto:press@usdoj.gov) or (202) 514-2007. Please RSVP with the email address of the person(s) attending the event, so that we may reach them directly if details change. Location: 7th Floor Conference Room U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Ave NW. [www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov)  
<https://twitter.com/TheJusticeDept>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** “I want you to consider this, especially if you’re a Trump supporter or member of the NRA: Do you really think these kids, these teenagers who spoke out after a shooting at their school, are actors who are a part of deep conspiracy? If the answer is yes, and you do believe that, I have something for you. You’re crazy. You’re a crazy it person. You’re brain is not working properly, and I’m worried about you.”

**Stephen Colbert:** “Many online are accusing the Parkland survivors of being so-called ‘crisis actors’ who traveled to the sites of shootings to instigate fury against guns. That’s right. We’re being taken in by the dazzling theatrical performances of high school actors. ... That is wrong on a lot of levels, not just because it diminishes the tragedy of what these kids are experience, but it also gives theater majors false hope that some day they’ll get jobs.”

**James Corden:** “According to a New York Times survey of political scientists across both parties, Donald Trump has been rated America’s worst President ever. I had a sneaking suspicion that he was voted the worst President ever by a survey, which is pretty incredible, because it’s the first time Trump has won a popular vote.”

**Trevor Noah:** “The Winter Olympics are in full swing, which means we get all the pageantry of Russian cheating on ice.”

**Trevor Noah:** “President Trump might be supporting a ban on bump stocks and strengthening of background checks, which is weird, right? Trump might do something good. You know, you don’t know how to feel about that.”

**Trevor Noah:** “You do realize if people weren’t allowed to share their opinions unless they studied the issues, then Donald Trump would never be allowed to speak, right? Never allowed to speak. Because, I mean, the only thing he studied is real estate and cheeseburgers. That’s it.”

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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## DOI In The News

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### Department Of Interior Documents Show Original Focus On Oil Exploration In National Monument Land.

The [New York Times](#) (3/2, Lipton, Friedman) reports that internal agency documents show the Department of Interior "was focused on the potential for oil and gas exploration at" the protected Bears Ears National Monument in Utah "even before President Trump opened his high-profile review" of the lands last spring. The documents show that Sen. Orrin Hatch "asked a senior Interior Department official" in March 2017 "to consider reduced boundaries for Bears Ears National Monument...to remove land that contained oil and natural gas deposits that had been set aside to help fund area public schools," and provided a map of Bears Ears which "was incorporated almost exactly into the much larger reductions President Trump announced in December." The documents were published by the [New York Times](#) (3/2).

The [AP](#) (3/2) reports that "agency spokeswoman Heather Swift said Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke considered the viewpoints of 'members of Congress, governors, state and tribal leaders, and the public' before recommending reductions at the Utah monuments." Swift "said he also heard from the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, which is responsible for education funding that comes in part from the sale of resources from state lands." Also, "Hatch's office said Friday that the Republican lawmaker was 'grateful' for the release of the emails because they make clear that his request for changes to the monument were focused on school funding."

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (3/2, Maffly) reports that however, "for a leader of Utah Diné Bikéyah, one of the tribal groups that advocated for Bears Ears, release of the emails was confirmation of hypocrisy on behalf of political leaders." Willie Grayeyes, the group's board chairman for Utah Diné Bikéyah, said, "As we can see from these letters, the reassurances from Utah politicians do not match their actions." He asked, "Why are human lives and pristine landscapes not honored as respected by Utah leaders? What will it take for them to hear our voice?"

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (3/2, Delk) and [MSNBC](#) (3/2).

### US Interior Boss Defers Contested Oil And Gas Lease Sale.

The [AP](#) (3/2, Bryan) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is "putting the brakes on an upcoming oil and gas lease sale after hearing concerns from American Indian tribal leaders and others about potential effects on numerous cultural sites that dot the northwestern corner of New Mexico." The move, described as a "surprise" by the AP, was "welcomed Friday by environmental groups and others who had organized around a campaign to flood the Bureau of Land

Management with an unprecedented number of protests against the sale.” Zinke “told the Albuquerque Journal in an interview Thursday in Washington that the agency would halt the sale of 25 parcels, citing the concerns about cultural impact.” On Friday, Zinke explained that “he wants the agency to complete an ongoing analysis of nearly 5,500 culture sites in the proposed leasing area.” Zinke said in a statement, “I’ve always said there are places where it is appropriate to develop and where it’s not. This area certainly deserves more study.”

Also reporting are the [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Eilperin), the [Farmington \(NM\) Daily Times](#) (3/2, Moses), the [Alamosa \(CO\) Valley Courier](#) (3/4), [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (3/3, Stiny), and the [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (3/2, Thompson).

### **As CERAWeek Kicks Off, Energy Industry Focuses On Technology, Innovation.**

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (3/2, Blunt) reports that Interior Ryan Zinke is among this year’s headliners at this week’s CERAWeek conference in Houston. Likely topics for discussion at the conference include the US shale boom, the OPEC production cut agreement, and how oil field operations are being increasingly transformed with the advent of digital technology.

### **In Pa., Zinke Unveils Federal Government’s \$55M Toward State’s Abandoned Mine Cleanup Efforts.**

[NPR](#) (3/2, Frazier) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke went to Western Pennsylvania “to tout the federal government’s abandoned mine cleanup program.” Zinke visited East Bethlehem Township, Washington County, “to announce \$300 million in federal funds for abandoned mine lands throughout the country.” The article notes that “of the \$300 million in abandoned mine funding, Pennsylvania’s share will be \$55 million, second only to Wyoming’s, at \$91 million.”

### **Trump Administration Weighs Plan To Lower Offshore Oil And Gas Royalty Rates.**

[Platts](#) (3/2, Scheid) reports the Trump administration is reviewing “an industry-backed recommendation to cut royalty rates for all leases in federal waters by one-third, a proposal aimed at boosting offshore oil and natural gas production.” The proposal, which was “unanimously approved by the Department of Interior’s Royalty Policy Committee on Wednesday,” calls to reduce “rates for offshore oil and gas leases in US waters...from 18.75% to 12.5%.” National Ocean Industries Association spokesperson Nicolette Nye said, “As companies determine where to spend their limited capital money for exploration, the 12.5% rate may be the tipping point for deciding whether to invest in US waters.” Executive Director of the Center for Western Priorities Jennifer Rokala criticized the recommendation and said, “Zinke has stacked the deck with energy companies and asked them if they should pay less to extract oil, gas, and coal from our public lands and waters. ... It’s like asking kindergarteners if they want birthday cake for dinner. You know the answer you’ll get.” The [Houma \(LA\) Courier](#) (3/3, Magill) reports supporters of the recommendation believe the reduced royalty rate “could reinvigorate an offshore oilfield that has shed thousands of jobs amid a three-and-a-half-year bust,” while opponents believe “the measure amounts to a giveaway that benefits oil companies at the expense of U.S. taxpayers.”

### **Coal Industry Mired In Decline Despite Trump Pledges.**

[The Hill](#) (3/4, Wilson) reports President Trump “has moved aggressively in his first year in office to roll back regulations he says have harmed America’s coal miners” but according to the Energy Information Agency “Americans will be less dependent on coal, that coal production will fall, and that coal capacity in the nation’s power plants is likely to decline in coming years.” The Hill adds “the war on coal, in short, is over. And coal lost.” Experts contend that coal regulations “may have hastened the demise of a once-dominant industry. But the decline started with market forces far more powerful than any presidential administration, including changing demands and the low cost of natural gas.”

### **Greens Launch Ads Against Republicans Who Voted For Drilling In Arctic Refuge.**

[The Hill](#) (3/2, Cama) reports the National Resources Defense Council’s (NRDC) campaign arm on Friday “launched a six-figure advertising campaign” against Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick, Ryan Costello, Patrick Meehan, and Erik Paulson over their vote “to permit oil and natural gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)” as part of “the controversial GOP tax overhaul last year, which has a provision that authorizes it.”

### **Along California-Oregon Border, Debate Over Protected Lands Is Clash Of Values.**

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (3/4, Alexander) reports that the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument is "at the heart of a nationwide debate over the management of America's public lands," following President Trump's recent decision to shrink two monuments in Utah. The Trump Administration has "recommended more logging and cattle grazing." But "all four senators from California and Oregon, as well as many in the state legislatures, are lining up with conservation groups to protest."

#### **Daines, Tester Present Plan To Spend \$80M A Year On Montana's Rural Water Projects.**

The [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (3/2, Lutey) reports that Sens. Jon Tester and Steve Daines "have put forth a 20-year plan to spend \$80 million a year on Montana rural water projects, most of which have been funded a few million dollars at a time since first being endorsed by Congress in 2000." The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Water and Power "held a hearing on the Montana bill Wednesday, during which the Department of Interior made its case for funding rural water projects." Alan Mikkelsen, senior adviser to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on water and western resources, "said the Interior also supported firming up American Indian tribal water rights and compensating tribes for land lost to reservoirs."

#### **Questions Surround Trump's 1st Wall Contract.**

The [AP](#) (3/2, Beck) reports that Nebraska startup SWF Constructors, which was "awarded the first border wall construction project" under President Trump, "is the offshoot of a construction firm that was sued repeatedly for failing to pay subcontractors and accused in a 2016 government audit of shady billing practices." The AP says "it remains unclear why SWF was listed" on the wall contract bid rather than its New York-based owner Edgewood, but legal experts suspect it may reflect "an attempt to dodge scrutiny of past legal problems."

### **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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#### **FBI: Spike In Pine Ridge Reservation Homicides Tied To Meth.**

The [AP](#) (3/4) reports the FBI says that "An increased prevalence of meth at South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation led to an unusual number of homicides in 2016," in the AP's words. FBI Assistant Special in Charge Robert Perry said, "We wanted to understand, 'Is there something we're missing?' Is there a trend here that we haven't identified that we could affect?' The answer really is we didn't find anything other than the drug use." The [Rapid City \(SD\) Journal](#) (3/4, Tan) reports, "Perry said the violent deaths tapered off in 2017 once the Pine Ridge meth trade dynamics got sorted out."

#### **Family Rails Against Bureau Of Indian Affairs.**

The [Daily Mail](#) (3/2) reports that "an investigation into the whereabouts of missing 21-year-old woman from Montana has been turned over to the FBI." Ashley Loring Heavyrunner "vanished from Montana's Blackfeet Reservation in June of 2017 and has not been heard from since." The investigation was "initially opened and led by the Bureau of Indian Affairs," but "after more than nine months without success, the department turned their investigation over to the federal agency."

### **Bureau Of Land Management**

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#### **Prison Program To Rehab Sage Grouse Habitat Faces Uncertain Future.**

The [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (3/2, Plaven) reports that Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley are calling for the Interior Department "to continue funding an innovative prison work program designed to rehabilitate fire-scorched rangeland and restore habitat for sage grouse across the West." The senators "stressed the importance" of the Sagebrush in Prisons Project in a letter sent Feb. 15 to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke. The project "faces an uncertain future after a funding agreement for roughly \$500,000 with the BLM expired last September."

#### **Feral Cattle A Nuisance In A California National Monument.**

The [AP](#) (3/4) reports that feral cattle in the Sand to Snow National Monument have "become a nuisance to hikers and local vegetation." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/2, Sahagun) reports meanwhile, "a pack of pit bulls has been killing and eating wild cattle." According to the article,

"the conflicts have become a local crisis not just because of the wild cattle and dogs, but also because the number of visitors and hikers in the Mojave Preserve and Sand to Snow National Monument has increased dramatically since it received federal designation in 2016, up from 90,000 to 148,000 last year." The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, "which co-manage the monument's 101,000 acres as wilderness, said they plan in March to dispatch a team of federal land managers, biologists and representatives of the nearby Morongo Band of Mission Indians reservation to come up with a strategy and funds to eliminate the unbranded cattle and collarless dogs."

Additional coverage was provided by [Newsweek](#) (3/3, Delzo).

### **Joshua Tree Cries Foul As Trump Targets California Desert For Energy.**

The [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (3/2, Roth) reports that nearly 200 people attended a public meeting in the town of Joshua Tree on the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan last Thursday. Trump Administration officials "say they're looking for ways to open more...lands not only to renewable energy projects, but also to mining, grazing, off-roading and broadband internet infrastructure to serve rural communities." According to the article, "most of the people who attended Thursday's meeting are adamantly opposed to any changes to the desert plan — at least under the Trump administration."

### **Gianforte Proposes To Release Montana Wilderness Study Areas.**

The [AP](#) (3/4) reports that Rep. Greg Gianforte has "drafted two bills proposing to release almost 690,000 acres (279,000 hectares) of wilderness study areas in Montana." One bill "proposes to release 449,500 acres (182,000 hectares) of wilderness study areas all on national forest lands." The other would "release an additional 240,000 acres (97,000 hectares) of Bureau of Land Management wilderness."

Also reporting are the [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (3/3, French), and the [Missoula Current \(MT\)](#) (3/2, Kidston).

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Trump Drilling Plan Faces Backlash.**

[The Hill](#) (3/4, Cama) reports, "The oil industry has been put on the defensive in the fight over the Trump administration's plan to expand offshore drilling." According to the Hill, "Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's decision to consider oil and natural gas drilling nearly everywhere along the nation's coasts" is facing a "fierce and bipartisan" backlash. However, "the oil industry has also been active, drawing upon military veterans, grass-roots efforts and web advertising to push the drilling expansion." The American Petroleum Institute has been actively "meeting with decisionmakers and using its existing grass-roots campaigns like Energy Nation and Energy Citizens." API Upstream director Erik Milito said, "If we're going to truly try to embrace American energy security, it's essential for us to keep as many options on the table as possible, so we can at least find out what kind of resources might be out there. That's all we're talking about at this point." According to the Hill, "Milito said much of the conversation from API centers on the argument that it's in the country's best interest to produce more oil and gas domestically instead of relying on imports."

[Brunswick \(GA\) News](#) (3/3, Wolfe) reported on a BOEM public hearing for Georgians on offshore drilling was attended by both environmentalists and "a number of industry advocates," including Georgia Energy Council executive director Hunter Hopkins – who "said he spent around an hour and a half between the stations and talking with BOEM staff and attendees, and said he felt the people from BOEM knew of what they spoke."

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **AZ Water Managers Disagree On Ways To Avoid Colorado River Shortage.**

The [Arizona Republic](#) (3/2, Loomis) reports that "Arizona officials are calling for new conservation measures on the Colorado River that would protect water levels in Lake Mead from the effects of a relentless drought across the Southwest." Gov. Doug Ducey's administration "wants legislative authority to allow water users to skip delivery of some of their allocation this year to prevent shortages in future years." However, the Central Arizona Project has "opposed the idea,

preferring to stick with existing programs.”

## Fish And Wildlife Service

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### Groups, US Reach Settlement On Predator-Killing Poisons.

The [AP](#) (3/2, Ridler) reports that federal officials have “agreed to complete a study on how two predator-killing poisons could be affecting federally protected species as part of the settlement of a lawsuit filed by environmental and animal-welfare groups.” The agreement filed Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Montana “requires the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete consultations with the Environmental Protection Agency by the end of 2021 on the two poisons used by federal workers on rural Western lands to protect livestock.” According to the article, “the Center for Biological Diversity and the other groups in the lawsuit filed last year in Montana say Fish and Wildlife is violating the Endangered Species Act by not analyzing with the EPA how sodium cyanide and Compound 1080 could harm federally protected species including grizzly bears and Canada lynx.”

### Judge Gives Group 90 Days To Save Historic Arkansas Bridge.

The [AP](#) (3/4) reports that “an Arkansas judge has given supporters of the old White River bridge in Clarendon 90 days to find a way to prevent the 87-year-old span from being demolished.” Pulaski County Circuit Judge Chris Piazza “says he will dismiss a lawsuit to block the bridge’s destruction if there is no deal to keep the bridge intact.” The [Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette](#) (3/4, Lynch) reports that “the old bridge and its replacement are both in the wildlife sanctuaries on the White and Cache rivers that are overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”

## National Park Service

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### U.S. National Parks Still Aren’t Sure How To Deal With Overtourism.

[Skift](#) (3/2, Peltier) reports that “many U.S. National Park Service officials have publicly pointed to the negative impact of overtourism during the past year, and they are considering reservation systems for some parks and other measures to address visitor growth.” However, such systems “aren’t imminent, said Donny Leadbetter, tourism program manager for the U.S. National Park Service.” Leadbetter said, “The reservation systems are probably not happening this year, they’re at least a year or more away. We have online portals where we collect comments on plans and have community meetings. There are macro constraints that are out of the control of the travel industry.”

### DC Gun Control March Bumped From Site For Talent Show.

The [AP](#) (3/2) reports that “a DC gun control rally later this month can’t be held at the National Mall because the space was already reserved for a talent show.” National Park Service spokesman Mike Litterst said the “March For Our Lives” organizers “applied for a space that was already taken, forcing them to search for another site.” The [Huffington Post](#) (3/2, Papenfuss) reports that organizers are “now seeking a permit to use Pennsylvania Avenue on a route that would take them from the Capitol to Trump International Hotel.”

### Peak Bloom For DC’s Famed Cherry Trees Is Coming Early.

The [AP](#) (3/2) reports that the National Park Service announced Thursday the projected peak date for Washington’s cherry blossoms will be March 17 to March 20. Park Service spokesman Mike Litterst “says April 4 is the historical average date for peak bloom, which is the day when 70 percent of the blossoms are open in trees around the Tidal Basin.” This year’s National Cherry Blossom Festival will run from March 20 to April 15.

### No Food, Lodging At Glacier’s Sperry Complex This Summer.

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (3/4, Byron) reports that “dead and dying trees from the 2017 Sprague fire in Glacier National Park need to be cleared out” before the Sperry Chalet area can be opened to the public. Lauren Alley, a spokesperson for Glacier National Park, “said they’ll start clearing trees from the 6-mile trail to the Sperry Chalet complex as soon as the snow melts.” Alley said, “Snyder and Sperry backcountry campgrounds are targeted for opening in August. Lincoln



backcountry campground may open in September. Rehabilitation is needed at those campgrounds following the fire."

### **Off-road Vehicle Access Expands In Glen Canyon Under New Proposal.**

The [Arizona Daily Sun](#) (3/3, Cowan) reports that "off-road vehicle users would have more legal access to areas around Lake Powell but could also be required to purchase a permit and abide by new seasonal beach closures under a set of regulations being considered at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area." According to Glen Canyon superintendent William Shott, "the changes could mean new permit costs for off-road vehicle, or ORV, users and an increase in ORV traffic and tourism opportunities in the national recreation area." Shott said, "We're seeing a trend at Glen Canyon to where boating activity has flatlined and actually declined by 10 percent but visitation is booming and the majority of visitor use is land-based. This is giving more folks more opportunities that are managed by specific purpose."

Additional coverage was provided by the [St. George \(UT\) News](#) (3/3).

### **Rocky Mountain National Park Will Open 2-mile Stretch Of Lakeside Trail To Mountain Bikes.**

The [Denver Post](#) (3/2, Blevins) reports that Rocky Mountain National Park will "allow mountain bikes on a 2-mile stretch of lakeside trail in Grand County." The move is "about 18 years in the making." Cycling advocates are "heralding the first embrace of mountain biking in Rocky Mountain National Park — and a rare approval for mountain biking in any national park — as a step toward acknowledging the importance of all forms of cycling."

### **Yellowstone National Park Preparing Roads For Spring.**

The [AP](#) (3/3) reports that crews in Yellowstone National Park are "planning to close roads to oversnow travel as they prepare for the spring." Park officials "say the road between Mammoth Hot Springs and Norris will be the first to close Sunday, and the remaining roads will close to oversnow travel by March 15."

### **NPS Will Close River Road To Protect Breeding Amphibians.**

The [Hawley \(PA\) News Eagle](#) (3/1) reports that "motorists can expect River Road within Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area to be closed on several evenings over the next few weeks to protect breeding amphibians." Each year, the National Park Service "take steps to protect migrating amphibians by closing River Road in Middle Smithfield Township between park headquarters and Hialeah Picnic Area on several mild, rainy nights from March to mid-April." This "allows vulnerable amphibians to crawl or hop from distances of a few hundred feet to sometimes more than a quarter mile, to moist breeding pools without the risk of being crushed by vehicle tires."

### **NPS To Hold Meeting On Climbing Regulations.**

The [Beckley \(WV\) Register-Herald](#) (3/4, Jackson) reports that "after two years of meetings and planning, the National Park Service will put into motion a change to its climbing rules and regulations in the New River Gorge area." The NPS will host a public education session on March 26.

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **President Trump OKs Disaster Declaration In American Samoa.**

The [AP](#) (3/3) reports President Trump on Friday approved a disaster declaration for American Samoa, freeing up federal assistance to the US territory "in the wake of damage caused by tropical storm Gita last month." The AP says the funds "can go toward grants for temporary housing, home repairs, low-cost loans for property losses and other programs."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **1.5M 'Rare Penguins' Discovered In Antarctica.**

[Fox News](#) (3/2) reports that "a thriving 'hotspot' of 1.5 million Adelie penguins, a species fast declining in parts of the world, has been discovered on remote islands off the Antarctic

Peninsula." Scientists found "that the first bird census of the Danger Islands unearthed over 750,000 Adelie breeding pairs, more than the rest of the area combined, the team reported in the journal Scientific Reports." The article notes that "evidence of the previously-unknown penguin colony first emerged in data from the Landsat Earth-monitoring satellites run by NASA and the US Geological Survey."

## Opinion Pieces

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### **Sec. Zinke Putting Our Special Places At Risk.**

In an op-ed for the [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (3/3, Adams), Stephanie Adams, the Yellowstone program manager for National Parks Conservation Association, acknowledges "a few bright spots" from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's first year in office, including support "for protecting Yellowstone and the Paradise Valley from two encroaching large-scale gold mines" and a focus on "the growing maintenance backlog at our national parks." However, Adams writes, these "have largely been overshadowed by actions from his department, and the Trump administration, that can be summed up as a war on our national parks and public lands." Adams urges Zinke to "draw inspiration" from President Theodore Roosevelt "in year two of his public service."

### **Desert Lands Mark Zinke Anniversary With Plenty Of Uncertainty.**

In an op-ed for the [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (3/4, Lamfrom), David Lamfrom, the California Desert Director for National Parks Conservation Association, claims that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "first year of actions would undermine over 40 years of progress and have placed over 6 million acres of desert lands in harm's way." Lamfrom takes issue with the inclusion of Mojave Trails and Sand to Snow National Monuments in Zinke's review of national monuments, the Cadiz Inc. water proposal, fee hikes at national parks, and possible changes to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. He argues that "Zinke's policies are out of step with realities on the ground and undercut genuine partnerships between communities and some of the local staff at National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and U.S Fish and Wildlife Service."

### **What The Most Endangered Grizzlies In The Lower 48 Don't Need: A National Hiking Trail Through Their Territory.**

In an op-ed for the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/4, Bass), Rick Bass, an author and a founding board member of the Yaak Valley Forest Council, raises concerns with a proposed hiking path through the Yaak Valley, in northwestern Montana. The Pacific Northwest Trail would pass "dead-center through the heart of the territory occupied by the Yaak's remnant population of grizzlies." Bass hopes "to sit down with scientists and agency officials...and find a solution."

### **Our Opinion: Offshore Drilling Not Worth The Risk.**

The [Greensboro \(NC\) News & Record](#) (3/3) picked up an editorial in which the [Winston-Salem \(NC\) Journal](#) (3/1) argued that BOEM representatives, who held the department's "only public meeting in the state for commenting on the Trump administration's plan to open our coast to offshore drilling" this week, were still greeted by "hundreds of environmentalists," despite restrictions on public comments. The Journal reported the North Carolina Petroleum Council's David McGowan said, "Gov. Cooper and other outspoken opponents of offshore energy development have said 'not off our coast' or essentially 'not in my backyard.' This is not a productive, responsible state energy strategy." However, according to the Journal, "actually it is. What's irresponsible is risking such a unique treasure as our coast for temporary financial gain from a relatively limited resource." The Journal concludes that the "proposal has drawn opposition from 14 coastal-state governors, Democrats and Republicans alike, including Gov. Henry McMaster of South Carolina and Florida Gov. Rick Scott, who has been promised an exemption from the drilling plan... These people know what they've got and they know what we know — it's not worth the risk."

### **Where's The Outrage Over Cutting Oil And Gas Royalty Rates.**

[New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (3/4, Marshall) columnist Bob Marshall asserts, "next time a Louisiana politician – or anyone else working for the oil industry – says they support expanded offshore oil development because the royalties help pay for our coastal restoration projects, feel free to stick a big Pinocchio nose on them." He questions why politicians who use royalties to



justify their support for “President Donald Trump’s Drill-Everywhere-Now-Baby! Policy” have not expressed outrage at the Interior Department’s recent recommendation to lower royalty payments for offshore oil and gas drilling. Marshall warns, “You don’t need an Ivy League degree like Trump’s to understand increasing the number of wells, but reducing the royalties will end up being a big win for the oil companies, but likely a big zero for the coast. But it also will mean increased pollution and higher risk of a catastrophic disaster like the Deepwater Horizon.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Harmful Public Lands Bills In Congress.* [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (3/4, Neckels).
- *Editorial: A Toxic Solution To Westlands Lawsuit.* [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (3/4).
- *Tap Fund For Coal Country Land, Water Restoration.* [Scranton \(PA\) Times Tribune](#) (3/4, HUGHES).
- *Guest Opinion: Paonia Reservoir Dramatic Example Of Widespread Water Infrastructure Needs.* [Glenwood Springs \(CO\) Post Independent](#) (3/3, Holm).
- *Viewpoint: National Parks May Face Drastic Cuts.* [Mount Desert \(ME\) Islander](#) (3/2, Steele).
- *Guy W. Farmer: BLM Should Head West.* [Nevada Appeal](#) (3/3, Farmer).
- *Zimmerman: The Bureau Of Land Management Is Promoting A “Bad Neighbor” Policy For Public Lands.* [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (3/2, Zimmerman).
- *Making, Not Breaking, Sage-grouse Recovery.* [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (3/3, Laszlo).
- *Despite Progress, Water Problem Is Still Here.* [Kingman \(AZ\) Daily Miner](#) (3/4).
- *The Importance Of Roadless Areas.* [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (3/3, Allison).
- *A Bit Of Missed News.* [Idaho State Journal](#) (3/4, Maughan).
- *Guest View: The Conservative Argument For The CSKT Compact.* [Montana Standard](#) (3/4, Swanson).
- *A Cabinet Full Of Corruption.* [Boston Globe](#) (3/2, Cohen).
- *White House & Trump Administration: Officials Spend Public Money.* [National Review](#) (3/2, Charen).

## **Top National News**

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### **Media Analyses: Despite Outcry, Administration To Proceed On Tariffs.**

With trade advisor Peter Navarro and Commerce Secretary Ross making the rounds on the Sunday shows, most media reports remark on their forcefulness in defending the President’s decision to levy tariffs on steel and aluminum imports. Trump also reiterated his position on [Twitter](#) last night, writing, “We are on the losing side of almost all trade deals. Our friends and enemies have taken advantage of the US for many years. Our Steel and Aluminum industries are dead. Sorry, it’s time for a change! MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!” Media analyses also reflected what the [AP](#) (3/4, Freking, Miller) termed the blurred “lines of partisanship” on the trade issue, with “labor unions and liberal Democrats...in the unusual position of applauding Trump...while Republicans and an array of business groups are warning of dire economic and political consequences if he goes ahead with the tariffs.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/4, King) reports that yesterday, “officials signaled...that...Trump is determined to impose punishing tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, brushing aside an outcry from foreign allies, US manufacturers, Republican lawmakers and other presidential advisors.” The [AP](#) (3/4, Freking, Miller) also says the Administration “appears unbowed by broad domestic and international criticism,” and [Bloomberg News](#) (3/4, Weiss, Niquette, Miller) that it “shows scant sign of watering down its plan to impose stiff tariffs,” and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/4, Leubsdorf, Ballhaus) runs a similar analysis. The [CBS Weekend News](#) (3/4, story 2, 1:15, Jiang), meanwhile, showed Ross saying, “The President has announced that this will happen this week. I have no reason to think otherwise.”

However, the [Washington Post](#) (3/4, Gearan, Demirjian) finds Ross and Navarro “sent mixed signals” and left “room for an unpredictable president to change his mind.” To the Post, “Ross said that although he does not expect Trump to change his mind, he does not rule it out.” On NBC’s Meet the Press, Ross said of Trump, “Whatever his final decision is, is what will happen. ... What he has said he has said; if he says something different, it’ll be something different.” The [New York Times](#) (3/4, Swanson), in a story titled “Trump Advisers Fervently Defend Tariffs

(Unless They Change, That Is)," takes a similar lines, reporting that "the White House continued to sow uncertainty...about the stiff tariffs."

□ [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/4, lead story, 2:45, Snow) also reported that Ross said he had "not seen any signs the President would back away or carve out certain exceptions for friendly nations, but he also cautioned that it's up to the President, and that the decision could come this week."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/4, King) reports Navarro and Ross "each suggested that Trump was unlikely to exempt allied countries from the tariffs, despite national-security concerns raised by some of his own advisors about the move." On □ [ABC's This Week](#) (3/4), for example, Ross defended the President's plan, saying that "economic security is national security," and said in regard to concerns from US allies, "We have unilaterally given away all kinds of concessions since the end of World War II. ... Concessions that were reasonable to make to Germany in 1945 or China in 1945 don't make sense any more" as "those are now very mature, big, strong economies."

Moreover, [USA Today](#) (3/4, Korte, Jackson) reports, the officials "downplayed the impact of the president's planned steel and aluminum tariffs on American consumers Sunday, saying they amount to 'a fraction of a penny on a can of beer.'" USA Today Ross told NBC's Meet the Press, "Retaliation isn't going to change the price of a can of beer. It isn't going to change the price of a car. It's just not going to. It can't." Ross also told □ [NBC's Meet the Press](#) (3/4, Todd) that "we have a big trade deficit with the rest of the world" as "our cumulative deficit equals the cumulative surplus of the rest of the world. ... They, therefore, have much more at risk in a trade war than we do." The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/4, Feldscher) notes "Ross said he thinks the 25 percent tariff on steel imports and 10 percent tax on aluminum imports will push other countries to the negotiating table for better trade deals." Said Ross, "They have a lot more to lose than we do because those hundreds of billions [of dollars] are in their pockets, not ours."

[Reuters](#) (3/4, Chiacu, Volcovici) also reports that Navarro "said countries will not be excluded from the tariffs because that would become a slippery slope, but there will be a mechanism for corporate exemptions in some cases." [Bloomberg News](#) (3/4, Weiss, Niquette, Miller) notes Navarro told Fox News Sunday, "As soon as he starts exempting countries, he has to raise the tariff on everybody else. ... As soon as he exempts one country, his phone starts ringing with the heads of state of other countries." [Breitbart](#) (3/4, Key) quotes Navarro as saying, "Difference between exemptions and country exclusions. They'll be an exemption procedure for particular cases where we need to have exemptions so that business can move forward, but at this point in time, the no country exclusions."

[Politico](#) (3/4, Palmer, Warmbrodt) says "Trump is imposing the tariffs as a result of a nine-month investigation that found that current volumes of steel and aluminum imports are a threat to national security because they undermine the long-term viability of both industries." However, "most other nations see that as a thinly disguised excuse to take protectionist measures." Navarro told □ [CBS' Face The Nation](#) (3/4, Brennan) that he is "surprised anyone was surprised by this" as "this goes back to April when the president directed the Secretary of Commerce to investigate what is severe just threat to our aluminum and steel industry."

Navarro also told □ [Fox News Sunday](#) (3/4, Wallace) that "Trump wants to...fulfill his campaign promises to the American people and the American workers," and "is doing this because if he doesn't...we will lose" the aluminum industry "very quickly and our steel industry very quickly thereafter. ... We're down to five smelters." Navarro said in regards to estimates of the tariffs' effect on US consumers, "When you're talking about these massive costs or whatever is in fact, it's not" because "there are no downstream price effects on our industries that are significant."

**Ross: Cohn "Certainly Not Going To Walk Out" Over Tariffs.** [Politico](#) (3/4, Warmbrodt) reports Ross also told ABC's "This Week" that "top White House economic adviser Gary Cohn is not leaving the administration after failing to stop...Trump from imposing" the tariffs. Said Ross, "The president likes to hear every side of every argument. ... That way he's sure he's gotten all points of view. We've had lively discussion, but Gary Cohn, as far as I know, is certainly not going to walk out."

**Navarro Denies Reports Of "Guerrilla Warfare" Leading Up To Trump's Decision.** The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/4, Lim) reports that on Fox News Sunday, Navarro "ripped reports Sunday that senior Trump administration officials were complaining that he used 'guerrilla warfare' tactics in the West Wing to unduly influence...Trump's economic policy, including lobbying for Trump's hastily announced tariffs on steel and aluminum imports." Said Navarro, "I would say that sitting here on a Sunday with you, that's a bit of a cheap shot, that there's no

facts and evidence to support that. ... And if I've learned anything in the 14 months here in Washington in the White House is that there's all sorts of malicious leaks that go in that try to hurt us."

Navarro, notes the [New York Post](#) (3/4, Schultz), also "accused the media...of hyping up a trade war and got a swift scolding from the show's anchor." Navarro said on Fox News, "It would be helpful if the media didn't have all these crazy headlines about trade wars." Anchor Chris Wallace "shot back in a heated interview that the media were just reporting on Trump's own tweet Friday."

**White House Meeting: Trump Called Cohn A "Globalist"; Cohn Thought Navarro And Ross Were "Lying."** [Axios](#) (3/4, Swan) describes a contentious White House meeting on the tariffs, in which "Cohn and [former aide Rob] Porter argued on one side, and Navarro and Ross fought on the other." Cohn "tried to argue that these tariffs would ruin Trump's record-setting stock market streak and wipe away benefits of tax reform. But Trump kept saying Cohn was a 'globalist' while he himself was an economic nationalist." Cohn "later told associates he believed Navarro and Ross were lying to the president." Politico adds, "Asked about this, a Commerce spokesman retorted: 'The facts that form the basis for this decision are laid out in the two 232 reports that Secretary Ross submitted to the President. No one has refuted the facts in those reports.'"

**Brady, Graham, Kasich Among Critics Of Trump Decision.** [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/4, lead story, 2:45, Snow) reported in its lead story that "heated responses is not just coming from overseas, but members of the President's own party are saying it's a risky move going against the globalism that Republicans advocated for decades and could actually cost more jobs than it creates." The [CBS Weekend News](#) (3/4, story 2, 1:15, Jiang) also said "Republicans are pleading with the President to pivot."

[Reuters](#) (3/4, Wroughton, Ljunggren) noted, for example, that reacting to Ross' comments, "Kevin Brady, chairman of the US House Ways and Means Committee, said on Sunday all fairly traded steel and aluminum, especially from Canada and Mexico, should be excluded from...Trump's proposed tariffs." Brady "was speaking on the sidelines of the latest round of NAFTA talks between the United States, Canada and Mexico where he said there had been progress in renegotiating the 24-year-old trade deal."

The [Washington Times](#) (3/4, Sherfinski) reports Sen. Lindsey Graham "said...Trump's recent move to impose new tariffs on steel and aluminum imports lets China 'off the hook.'" Graham told CBS' Face the Nation, "China wins when we fight with Europe. China wins when the American consumer has higher prices because of tariffs that don't affect Chinese behavior."

Gov. John Kasich, on [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (3/4, Tapper), expressed his disagreement with Trump's announcement, "First of all, I don't want to disrupt the bulk of things and have lots of people...having high prices or other people losing their job." He added that what Trump "ought to do, working with the Congress and outside group, we ought to modernize the way in which we determine whether the trade agreements are being violated" but "just to turn around one day" and impose tariffs, "which the Department of Defense doesn't even agree to, doesn't make much sense."

In an editorial this morning, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/4) roundly dismisses the notion that Trump's tariffs will revive a steel industry which, according to the Journal, no longer exists as a significant segment of the US economy. Ross, on [Fox News Sunday Morning Futures](#) (3/4, Bartiromo), was pressed on criticism of the President's plans from the [Wall Street Journal](#) editorial page. Said Ross, "Well, let's go through the points that they made. ... Europe has announced some retaliations in its own some \$3 billion worth of product" which "is a tiny fraction of 1%, so while it may be painful for those particular companies in the overall scheme of things, it doesn't mean very much of anything." Also, "in terms of the inflationary impact we're talking about a total of \$9 billion of tariffs" which is "about one-half of 1% of the economy, so this business that 'the sky is falling' is just silly."

Michael Bender of the Wall Street Journal said on [CNN Inside Politics](#) (3/4), "We saw Trump's announcement was rejected by the markets," which "took a turn down after he made that announcement and the point there is that it's not the specifics of what the Secretary of Commerce is talking about, but the larger picture here. It's the further dismantling of the global compact that's been in place in recent decades and another indication that the US is more interested in dismantling it than helping put that back together."

Mary Katherine Ham of The Federalist, also on [CNN Inside Politics](#) (3/4), said, "Let's talk about something the President actually cares about which is on the tax bill, the numbers on that have gone up 20 plus points because reality is on the side of the Republican argument, people are seeing this in their paychecks." Trump "is in danger of undercutting every single thing that he

achieved with that one legislative victory with what is essentially a tax on a bunch of employers on a bunch of American workers."

**WSJournal Analysis: Tariffs Could Hurt Infrastructure Push.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/4, Harrison) reports that Trump's declaration that he will impose tariffs on steel and aluminum imports could undermine his push to rebuild US infrastructure because the tariffs could increase the cost of the projects.

**Politico Analysis: Republicans Worry Tariffs Will Hurt Them In Midterms.** [Politico](#) (3/4, Bade, Everett) reports "Trump's threatened trade war has opened a rift within the Republican Party that some lawmakers and strategists believe could undermine their effort to keep their majorities in Congress." While "Republicans plan to brag about the economy in midterm campaigns in hopes of countering Trump's unpopularity," the President's "suggestion...that he might slap penalties on European cars, in addition to the tariffs on aluminum and steel he already promised, could upend that strategy completely, Republicans say." To Politico, "what might be good politics for Trump personally might not work for the entire party," particularly as the move is "allowing Democrats to hug Trump just when Republicans have been trying to position the opposing party as detrimental to Trump's economy. Vulnerable Democratic incumbents from the Rust Belt have rushed to praise Trump for taking action that could help industries in their states."

**Media Analyses: Chinese Reaction Could Hurt US Exporters, Upend Policy Toward North Korea.** [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/4, story 2, 1:00, Frayer) reported "China warned they do not want a trade war, but also said it will not ignore impact of ...Trump's tariffs could have on its economy." A "senior official...said China would take necessary measures, which could mean trouble for US exporters in China – from soybeans to Boeing products to anything Apple manufactures. Also at risk, China's pressure to maintain North Korea," which "could wane if the US rhetoric becomes policy this week."

**British PM Expresses "Deep Concern" In Conversation With Trump.** [Bloomberg News](#) (3/4, Hutton) reports that the British government said yesterday Prime Minister Theresa May told Trump "the UK has 'deep concern' about the US plan to slap tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, and negotiated accords are better." The two "spoke Sunday by telephone, with May saying 'multilateral action was the only way to resolve the problem of global overcapacity in all parties' interests,' according to a spokesman for the prime minister." The [New York Post](#) (3/4, Schultz) notes "Downing Street released a readout of the call between the two leaders, but the White House has yet to provide its version of the conversation." The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/4, Barron-Lopez) and [The Hill](#) (3/4, Sanchez), among other news outlets, run similar reports this morning.

**Europeans Fear "Glut" Of Cheap Steel Imports Following US Move.** Under the headline "Europe Fears Return Of Steel Glut As US Imposes Tariffs," the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/4, Turner) reports Europeans fear the US decision to impose tariffs could lead to a glut of cheap steel imports flooding their markets. Hans Jürgen Kerckhoff, president of the German Steel Federation, is quoted as saying, "Diverted trade flows threaten Europe with a new steel glut when as things are the EU market is far from tackling (its own) import crisis. ... If the EU doesn't act, our steel industry is going to be left footing the bill for American protectionism."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (3/4, story 3, 0:40, Arouzi) reported that "France and Germany are rattled and loudly warning they will not sit idly by if import taxes are enacted." Trump "threatened a 25 percent tax on European cars if there's a retaliation," which "would be a big blow to German brands like Mercedes and BMW."

### **Trump Threatens To Impose Tax On European Cars If EU Retaliates Over Steel, Aluminum Tariffs.**

President Trump on Saturday threatened to tax European automakers if the EU retaliates against the US for imposing tariffs on steel and aluminum. Media coverage, which includes nearly six minutes on the network newscasts, was also heavy in print and online. Reporting is generally negative toward Trump's remarks, which were characterized as escalating tensions and raising the likelihood of a trade war.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/3, Paletta, Dawsey) reports the President in a series of tweets "threatened to hammer European automotive companies with steep tariffs as his global trade war snowballed into a third day" after European leaders warned Friday that "his promised tariffs on aluminum and steel would trigger retaliation from numerous major U.S. trading partners." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/3, Mauldin, Ballhaus) reports Trump [said](#), "If the E.U. wants to further increase their already massive tariffs and barriers on U.S. companies doing business there, we will simply apply a Tax on their Cars which freely pour into the U.S. They make it impossible for

our cars (and more) to sell there. Big trade imbalance!" He separately [tweeted](#), "The United States has an \$800 Billion Dollar Yearly Trade Deficit because of our 'very stupid' trade deals and policies. Our jobs and wealth are being given to other countries that have taken advantage of us for years. They laugh at what fools our leaders have been. No more!"

According to the [New York Times](#) (3/3, Cochrane), the tweets represent "the latest indication that Mr. Trump, despite pressure from foreign allies and American business leaders, is standing by his decision to impose a 25 percent tariff on steel imports and a 10 percent tariff on aluminum imports from all countries." [USA Today](#) (3/3, Stanglin) describes the tweets as "the first rumblings of a potential trade war" while [Reuters](#) (3/3, Shepardson, Stone) similarly says the President's tweet "suggested he is refusing to yield to U.S. business interests and foreign trading partners alarmed at the prospect of a trade war that rattled financial markets this week." Reuters adds that Trump also "criticized Europe in remarks at a fundraiser, according to video posted online Saturday, and suggested they would not increase tariffs." Reuters quotes Trump as stating: "The European Union: brutal. They've been brutal to us. ... They've banded together in order to beat the United States in trade."

□ [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/3, story 6, 1:00, Diaz-Balart) correspondent Jeff Bennett said "language like that is little comfort to those in the President's own Administration and Republican leaders on Capitol Hill, who we're told are privately urging the President to reconsider given the potential blow to the economy." When asked "earlier this evening if he's concerned about launching a trade war," Bennett said, Trump "didn't respond." Those close to the President, however, "tell us he thinks the announcement is a political winner and he gets to make good on a key campaign promise."

In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (3/3, A1, Mufson, Paletta) reports that while Trump "aimed his harshest rhetoric at an unlikely target – the closest U.S. allies," trade experts "say the president has exaggerated and oversimplified the trade issues with Europe."

***EU, Canada Threaten To Retaliate Against Trump's Tariff Proposals.*** [ABC World News Tonight](#) □'s (3/3, story 6, 0:35, Vega) David Wright reported after President Trump "first proposed a new tariff on imported steel and aluminum, the EU and Canada said that they might have to respond with new tariffs of their own." [NBC Nightly News](#) □ (3/3, story 5, 1:55, Diaz-Balart) said the "message from overseas is clear: European nations are not going to quietly accept it." The backlash is "raising questions about the unintended consequences of the move," with Europe threatening to impose tariffs "on iconic American products like bourbon and blue jeans." Former USTR Michael Froman said European leaders are retaliating "against what they determine to be potentially sensitive sectors of the United States."

The [CBS Weekend News](#) □ (3/3, story 5, 2:10, Ninan) broadcast Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also warning, "We are impressing upon the American Administration the unacceptable nature of these proposals that are going to hurt them every bit as much as they will hurt us." Correspondent Weijia Jiang said Trump's proposal has also "sparked fears of a trade showdown with China." When asked what will prevent China and other US trading partners "from taking their business" outside the US, Alliance for American Manufacturing president Scott Paul responded: "There will be an adjustment as we rebalance this, but I think every other nation knows that they've been getting a good deal – in fact, I would call it a gift – from the United States, and now we expect reciprocity." Domestically, Jiang added, "A growing list of congressional Republicans are also publicly slamming the proposal."

***China Warns Tariffs Could Have "Huge Impact" On Global Trade.*** The [New York Times](#) (3/3, Bradsher) reports the President's tariff proposal "has drawn condemnation from the European Union, Canada and Brazil," but "the intended target of Mr. Trump's action, China, has been fairly cautious," in contrast. The Times says that while "China's commerce and foreign ministries have publicly criticized the decision, and the Commerce Ministry raised the possibility on Friday that China might retaliate," the country's remarks were "carefully calibrated to say that any retaliation would be based on the direct effects of the United States' actions on China's own interests." The [AP](#) (3/3, McDonald) reports Wang Hejun, the head of the Commerce Ministry's trade remedy and investigation bureau, said the tariffs would "seriously damage multilateral trade mechanisms represented by the World Trade Organization and will surely have huge impact on normal international trade order." Wang added, "If the final measures of the United States hurt Chinese interests, China will work with other affected countries in taking measures to safeguard its own rights and interests."

***NAFTA Negotiators Ignore Trump's Tariff Threats, Focus On Current Policy.*** [Reuters](#) (3/3, Graham, Garcia) reports that while "negotiations between the United States, Canada and Mexico to redraw the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) were clouded this week by Trump's



plan to slap 25 percent tariffs on steel imports and claims that trade wars are good," several participants in the talks "privately expressed frustration" with his remarks, but "said that Canadian, Mexican and the technical staff of U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Robert Lighthizer have remained focused on the task of overhauling the accord." A source close to the talks told Reuters that their approach is to "stick with the official positions of the government, and above all with our direct counterparts, USTR, the Commerce Department, and take serious decisions on that basis."

***Trump's Base, Republican Party Divided Over Tariff Proposal.*** In a front-page article, the [New York Times](#) (3/3, A1, Kitroeff, Swanson) reports that the President's plans "to impose steep tariffs on imported steel and aluminum delighted some blue-collar industries he had championed," but "behemoth steel buyers like Boeing and General Motors weren't as pleased" and "the most obvious aluminum dependents – the brewing giants Anheuser-Busch and MillerCoors – warned about the risk of job losses." The Times adds that "as industrial America sorts out the tariffs' prospective impact, one thing is clear: The divide between the metal producers and their customers slices directly through Mr. Trump's blue-collar constituency."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/3, Maher) reports the President's tariff proposal is popular with steel workers and labor leaders in Braddock, Pennsylvania, but the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/3, Cosgrove) says "California steel manufacturers are concerned that tariffs...will drive up the price of their products, threatening their ability to compete with foreign and eastern U.S. steel makers and forcing them to cut local jobs." The Times highlights that "on the West Coast, steel manufacturers largely depend on imported steel from Brazil, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Australia" because "the cost of bringing those slabs from the eastern United States to the West Coast is five times more expensive than bringing them from other countries."

Ann Wilson, a senior executive at the US Motor and Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA), also told [Reuters](#) (3/3, Wroughton) on Friday that the organization's members are "very concerned" with Trump's tariff threats and said, "our industry was really pleased with what we accomplished with tax reform and the improvement in the economy, and a lot of that enthusiasm could all be for naught if we do something like this." Wilson added, "The smaller suppliers are the ones at risk because they can't pivot and they can't move their businesses. ... They may not be able to absorb this kind of cost. It's not as simple as saying we'll just make that specialty steel here."

Meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/3, Mauldin) reports US farmers are worried the tariffs could prompt China and other countries to retaliate against US exports of sorghum and other crops and livestock. The Journal states that Agriculture Secretary Perdue on Wednesday acknowledged, "There's reason for anxiety, there's reason to understand that we need to have efforts that make sure that agriculture's not harmed in a way that would be hurtful in any kind of tariff negotiations or whatever we do on steel, aluminum or intellectual property."

The [AP](#) (3/3, Mascaro) also concedes the tariff proposal "pits Trump's populist promises to his voters against" the Republican Party's "free trade orthodoxy." According to the AP, Trump's ability to take executive action on trade policy has "intensifie[d] the pressure on Republican lawmakers to change [the President's] mind before he gives his final approval for the penalties as early as this coming week."

***Icahn Reduced Stake In Crane Manufacturer By Nearly 1 Million Shares In February.*** The [AP](#) (3/3) reports Carl Icahn, a billionaire investor who served as an unpaid adviser to the President last year, sold "nearly 1 million shares" of crane manufacturer Manitowoc Co. last month for \$31.3 million. [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Deveau) said that while "Icahn remains Manitowoc's fifth-largest holder with about 4.8 percent of the company's common shares," according to a recent regulatory filing, the stock "fell as much as 7 percent in New York trading Friday."

***Krugman, Ip Warn Trade War To Hurt US Economy, Agenda.*** In his [New York Times](#) (3/3, Krugman) column, Paul Krugman examines "what would happen if Trump really did try to close the trade gap – it's actually \$500 billion, not \$800 billion, but who's counting – by imposing tariffs." Krugman predicts the Federal Reserve "would raise rates sharply to head off inflationary pressures," which "would squeeze interest-sensitive sectors: Trump's friends in real estate would become very, very unhappy, as would anyone who is highly leveraged (hello, Jared [Kushner])" and "drive up the dollar, inflicting severe harm on U.S. export sectors. Greetings, farmers of Iowa!" Krugman concludes "add in the fact that other countries would retaliate – they're already drawing up their target lists – and the fact that we'd be alienating key allies, and you have a truly terrible, dumb policy idea. Which makes it quite likely, as I see it, that Trump will indeed follow through."

[Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Ip) chief economics commentator Greg Ip said that while tariffs on steel and aluminum are likely to have only a limited direct macroeconomic effect, the President's

proposal endangers his agenda and could make it more difficult to enact future pro-business policies.

### **Trump Asserts Trade Wars Are “Good” And Insists They Are “Easy To Win.”**

President Trump took to Twitter on Friday to defend his decision to impose tariffs on aluminum and steel in response to the mostly unfavorable media coverage of his announcement on Thursday. Reporting, which included just under two and a half minutes combined on the network newscasts, cast Trump as defiant amid criticism for a decision that was characterized as fulfilling a promise to his base and a defeat to the pro-trade leaders in his own party.

The [New York Times](#) (3/2, Swanson) reports the President “doubled down” on his decision to approve “stiff tariffs on steel and aluminum imports” and [Reuters](#) (3/2, Heavey) says “Trump struck a defiant tone...after his plan to put tariffs on steel and aluminum imports triggered threats of retaliation from trading partners and a slide in stock markets.” [AFP](#) (3/2, Gillison) similarly states that the President “remain[ed] defiant in the face of the global uproar sparked by his sudden announcement of steel and aluminum tariffs” while [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/2, story 6, 0:20, Muir) said Trump is “not backing down on tariffs,” even though the stock market is “reacting with high anxiety and despite criticism that America’s trading partners could retaliate and do the same to us.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Schlesinger) reports Trump [tweeted](#), “When a country (USA) is losing many billions of dollars on trade with virtually every country it does business with, trade wars are good, and easy to win. Example, when we are down \$100 billion with a certain country and they get cute, don’t trade anymore-we win big. It’s easy!” The President later [continued](#), “We must protect our country and our workers. Our steel industry is in bad shape. IF YOU DON’T HAVE STEEL, YOU DON’T HAVE A COUNTRY!” He [added](#), “When a country Taxes our products coming in at, say, 50%, and we Tax the same product coming into our country at ZERO, not fair or smart. We will soon be starting RECIPROCAL TAXES so that we will charge the same thing as they charge us. \$800 Billion Trade Deficit-have no choice!”

The [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Paletta) contends Trump’s “threats...looked to escalate his new protectionist policies,” as the President “vowed to impose trade restrictions on any country that he felt had an unfair trade relationship with the United States, following through on nationalist threats that many aides had spent more than one year trying to contain.”

Meanwhile, the [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Miller) reports Trump is scheduled to “hold a campaign rally March 10 in Moon Township, Pennsylvania, visiting the heart of steel country after announcing plans for big tariffs on steel and aluminum imports.” Michael S. Glassner, CEO of the Trump re-election campaign, said the President “is really looking forward to visiting the Pittsburgh area to highlight the benefits that his historic tax cuts are providing hardworking families across Pennsylvania and to celebrate our booming economy now that America is once again open for business.”

However, an [AP](#) (3/2, Boak, Woodward) “Fact Check” declares that “in agitating for a trade war,” Trump’s “spoiling-for-a-fight” tweets ignore Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman’s adage that “war is hell,” which the AP asserts is an “observation can be apt for trade wars,” as they “may create conditions for a shooting war.” According to the AP, “history suggests that trade wars are not easy” and while levying tariffs “may help certain domestic manufacturers, [they] can come at a broad cost.”

In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (3/2, A1, Lynch) asserts “Ashtabula is the kind of place that...Trump, and his chief trade adviser Robert E. Lighthizer, who grew up here, aim to help with” the tariffs, but while these communities “show why protectionism may be a political winner for the president, blocks of dilapidated clapboard houses signal broader economic woes that the administration’s proposed trade measures do not address.” The Post adds that Ashtabula and similar cities are unlikely to benefit from the tariffs and the [New York Times](#) (3/2, A1, Tankersley) warns in a front-page article that if a trade war occurs, “it will crimp economic growth, undermining the stimulative effects of Mr. Trump’s deregulation push and his signature \$1.5 trillion tax cut.”

The [New York Times](#) (3/2, A1, Swanson) in another front-page article cautions that “retaliation could hit hardest in many of the rural communities that were strongholds for Mr. Trump.” Darci Vetter, a former chief agricultural negotiator for the US Trade representative, highlighted that “Canada and Mexico were America’s No. 1 and No. 3 largest agricultural markets in 2016, and South Korea is a major market for beef, corn, pork and fresh fruit, Ms. Vetter said. The United States exports cotton to Turkey and wheat and dairy to Brazil, other major suppliers of steel.”

[NBC Nightly News](#) (3/2, story 6, 2:05, Holt) chief White House correspondent Hallie

Jackson reported Trump had allegedly decided to make the announcement on the tariffs on Thursday after he "became 'unglued' this week, in the words of one source, by a series of events including Hope Hicks' testimony to lawmakers on Russia. That's according to two officials familiar with the matter. Seething and spoiling for a fight, the President picked one on trade, throwing the markets and his West Wing into turmoil with a single sentence."

**Ross, Navarro: Tariffs To Have Minimal Impact On Cost Of Products In US.** [Reuters](#) (3/2, Heavey) reports Commerce Secretary Ross told [CNBC](#) on Friday said the President "seemed" to imply that the proposed tariffs would apply to all countries. Ross said Trump announced "a very broad concept of 25 percent on all steel and 10 percent on all aluminum." Ross added, "We'll have to see the intricate details, but that certainly is the broad outline and therefore it will have a fairly broad effect."

[Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/2, 6:41 p.m. EDT, Baier) broadcast Ross as stating on [CNBC](#), "You've got to look at the job creation and the impact on American employees. American employees have borne the brunt of all the imported steel and aluminum that's been coming in. So corporate America may complain; the President is taking up the banner of Mr. and Mrs. America." [CNBC](#) (3/2, Hirsch) reports Ross also insisted the tariffs will be "no big deal" and he cited the cost of a can of Campbell's Soup, but in a statement, a company spokesperson warned that "any new broad-based tariffs on imported tin plate steel – an insufficient amount of which is produced in the U.S. – will result in higher prices on one of the safest and more affordable parts of the food supply."

Meanwhile, [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Mayeda) reports that in an interview with Bloomberg TV, Ross acknowledged the Administration will "have to deal with a global problem on a global basis" to stop the "recurring phenomenon" of countries trying to evade the new tariffs.

In addition, [Fox Business](#) (3/2, Limitone) reports White House National Trade Council Director Navarro said on "Mornings with Maria" on Friday that the price effects of the new tariffs will be limited. Navarro asserted the "whole idea that there's a big downstream effect – it's just part of the fake news that's going to be put out to oppose these tariffs." Navarro added, "A penny for a six pack of beer – that's worth it to put Americans back to work in two industries that we need."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, A1, Schlesinger) in a front-page article reports an unnamed White House official also told reporters that the tariffs could not include exceptions because then many other countries would want them.

**Sanders: Trump "Pretty Committed" To Imposing New Tariffs, Says Cohn Not Likely To Resign.** The [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Persons, Boyer) reports White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders on Friday told reporters, "Never say never, but I think [Trump's] pretty committed to moving this forward." She continued, "This is something he's wanted to do for awhile." Sanders added the President was not concerned by the stock market declines on Thursday following the announcement and insisted that he remains "focused on long-term economic fundamentals. ... He is incredibly focused on the American worker. It's something that we have to have and something we need to have."

Meanwhile, [Reuters](#) (3/2, Holland, Gibson) reports "White House aides scrambled to downplay the prospect of a resignation by free trade advocate Gary Cohn, the top White House economic adviser, over the matter." Sanders told reporters that she spoke with National Economic Council Director Cohn "several times" on Thursday and said she does not "have any reason to think" he plans to resign over the tariffs despite what Reuters says was "speculation that Cohn, who told Trump the markets would slump on a tariffs threat, might step down as a result of Trump's decision."

**GOP Lawmakers Criticize Tariffs, As Some Democrats Praise Plan.** In an article titled "Trump's Steel-Tariffs Plan Rattles GOP Lawmakers," the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Mauldin) highlights Republican opposition to the President's trade policies in Congress, which includes Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady.

The [AP](#) (3/2, Thomas, Wiseman) reports that following Trump's tweet, Sen. Ben Sasse "echoed a sentiment of many U.S. lawmakers when he issued a statement in response: 'Kooky 18th century protectionism will jack up prices on American families.'" Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts warned, "Every time you do this, you get a retaliation and agriculture is the No. 1 target." [Reuters](#) (3/2, Chiacu) reports Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker in a statement on Friday "also urged...Trump to reconsider" the tariffs, which he warned would endanger "good-paying, family-supporting jobs in America."

In the lead story for [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/2, 6:00 p.m. EDT, Baier), correspondent Bret Baier said many of President Trump's supporters and "almost all of his critics are expressing



serious concerns" about his plans "to levy new tariffs on imported steel and aluminum." Another [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/2, 6:37 p.m. EDT, Baier) segment provided similar coverage.

However, [Reuters](#) (3/2, Cornwell) reports "some Democrats, mainly from Rust Belt states, but from other areas too, hailed" the proposed tariffs, including Sens. Sherrod Brown, Bob Casey, and Ron Wyden as well as Reps. Tim Ryan and Bill Pascrell. According to Reuters, the Democratic support "clashed with a generalized strong worry among most Republicans, long-time free trade champions, that Trump's move could trigger an international trade war." Reuters adds that a spokesman for House Speaker Ryan "urged Trump to reconsider his plan and its potential unintended consequences."

***Steel Makers Praise Tariff Plan, As Other Corporate Leaders Unite In Opposition.*** In an article headlined "Steel, Aluminum Makers Are Among Few To Praise Tariff Plans," the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Cameron, McGroarty) reports Nucor Corp., US Steel Corp., and Century Aluminum Co. embraced the President's proposal to impose tariffs, although Alcoa Corp. and California Steel Industries Inc. did not. In another article, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Trentmann) says German steel trader Klöckner & Co. forecast benefits from the tariffs and both German steel company Thyssenkrupp AG and Austrian steel producer Voestalpine Stahl GmbH projected that the measures will have only a limited impact on their operations. In addition, Russian steelmaker PAO Severstal said it intends to redirect shipments to other countries in response while a spokesman for Luxembourg-based ArcelorMittal said the company is still assessing the impact of the proposed tariffs.

According to the [AP](#) (3/2, Wiseman), the tariffs are "meant to protect an industry that employs about 140,000 Americans," but they "stand to hurt a far larger group of U.S. workers: the 6.5 million who work in industries that buy steel – from automakers to aircraft manufacturers to suppliers of building materials." [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Kaplan) reports "a broad swath of corporate America strongly disagrees" with the tariffs, "saying the levies will boost prices on everything from cars to beer and force companies to cut jobs." Bloomberg adds that "the policy would hit the auto and aerospace industries hardest, [but] it would also have ramifications for a wide range of businesses – and products that Americans purchase daily."

[Reuters](#) (3/2, Carey) reports that according to data from Statista, the US auto industry "accounted for 26 percent of U.S. steel demand in 2017, behind the construction industry's 40 percent." [Reuters](#) (3/2, Shepardson) reports Ford Motor Co in a statement on Friday cautioned the tariffs could harm the "competitiveness of American manufacturers" even though it already buys "the vast majority of its steel and aluminum for U.S. production in the U.S."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Kostov) reports a number of beer and beverage companies have also expressed opposition to the tariffs over concerns they will lead to price hikes for aluminum cans. Meanwhile, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/2, Mohan) says agricultural economists are warning food prices could be among the "casualties" of a trade war. The Times adds "no state has more at stake than California, which leads the country in agricultural revenue."

On [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/2, 6:24 p.m. EDT, Blitzer), The Atlantic senior editor Ron Brownstein said the reaction to the tariff proposal "is revealing of how much of the President's economic agenda is build on restoration, trying to restore the economic order" of "the mid-20th century." Brownstein added, "obviously, many more Americans" working in manufacturing industries "could be hurt" if higher aluminum and steel prices reduce "our ability to export to other countries. This is really about trying to protect and preserve one slice of the economy that has been shrinking, really at the expense of the components of the economy that are growing."

On [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/2, 5:31 p.m. EDT, Blitzer), political senior writer Juana Summers asserted "people are scared" Trump's tariffs will trigger a trade war and she added many economists disagree with Trump's belief that such an outcome would be "a good thing." Meanwhile, Politics editor-at-large Chris Cillizza said nations impacted by such tariffs would also disagree with Trump's calculation and he predicted "they will retaliate."

***US Allies Denounce Tariff Plan, As Many Countries Threaten To Retaliate.*** On the lead story for [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/2, 5:02 p.m. EDT, Blitzer), chief White House correspondent Jim Acosta declared that the tariffs are "almost certain to start a trade war" and Bret Baier said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/2, 6:05 p.m. EDT, Baier) that the international response "has been almost universally negative."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Barnes, Jun, Turner) and [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Curran) reports the tariffs infuriated US allies more than they have China or Russia. Bloomberg says the tariffs, like Trump's previous trade proposals, are "hurting his allies more than his rivals."

The [New York Times](#) (3/2, Eddy, Bray) reports European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker pledged the EU "will hit back at the heart of the United States, slapping tariffs on

products like Harley-Davidsons, Kentucky bourbon and bluejeans, if President Trump goes ahead with a plan to place tariffs on steel and aluminum imports." [Reuters](#) (3/2, Shalal) reports Juncker said, "If the Americans impose tariffs on steel and aluminum, then we must treat American products the same way," Juncker continued, "We must show that we can also take measures. This cannot be a unilateral transatlantic action by the Americans," He added, "I'm not saying we have to shoot back, but we must take action."

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Jennen, Hermse) reports Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte also called on the EU to take "a united response to...Trump's pledge to impose a tariff on steel imports, which may hit the Netherlands and Germany the hardest." In addition, the [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Noack) says that "officials in Germany, which exports more steel to the United States than any other European country, were among the most vocal critics," but German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel told a local newspaper, "We must do everything we can to avoid an international trade conflict."

EU sources told [Reuters](#) (3/2, Blenkinsop) that the bloc "is considering applying 25 percent tariffs on around \$3.5 billion of imports from the United States if...Trump carries out his plan to apply global duties to steel and aluminum." [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Deaux, Mayeda, Olorunnipa, Wasson) reports Juncker specifically "said the bloc is prepared to respond forcefully by targeting imports of Harley-Davidson Inc. motorbikes, Levi Strauss & Co. jeans and bourbon whiskey from the U.S."

[Reuters](#) (3/2, Blenkinsop) reports the EU will also "join other countries in challenging the measures" at the World Trade Organization. The [AP](#) (3/2, Keaten, Rising) reports WTO Director-General Roberto Azevedo "said the agency was 'clearly concerned' at the U.S. plans and warned that 'a trade war is in no one's interests.'" He added that "the potential for escalation is real as we have seen from the initial responses" and vowed that the WTO "will be watching the situation very closely." [Reuters](#) (3/2, Miles) says Azevedo's comments mark "an extremely rare intervention into a WTO member's trade policy."

[Reuters](#) (3/2, Wroughton) also reports the International Monetary Fund warned on Friday that the tariffs "would likely cause economic damage to the United States and its trading partners, and urged countries to resolve trade disputes without resorting to retaliatory measures." In a "terse statement," the IMF warned the tariffs "are likely to cause damage not only outside the U.S., but also to the U.S. economy itself, including to its manufacturing and construction sectors, which are major users of aluminum and steel." An IMF spokesman added, "We are concerned that the measures proposed by the U.S. will, de facto, expand the circumstances where countries use the national-security rationale to justify broad-based import restrictions."

In addition, [Reuters](#) (3/2, Schnurr) reports Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau "said on Friday any U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum imports would be 'absolutely unacceptable' and said his government would continue to engage with U.S. officials on the issue." In a separate article, [Reuters](#) (3/2, Ljunggren, Schnurr) reports Canadian officials have been "bombarding U.S. counterparts with calls to secure an exemption on potential steel and aluminum tariffs and threatening retaliation, but Ottawa has limited leverage to counter the plan, industry insiders and analysts said on Friday." A Canadian source "said officials are making the point that the steel and aluminum industries are so integrated that an exemption for Canada, the largest supplier of both steel and aluminum to the United States, is obvious but admitted leveraging person-to-person contacts may not matter in the end" as Trump is the "one guy who is going to decide at the end."

[Reuters](#) (3/2, Angulo) reports Mexico's chief NAFTA trade negotiator Kenneth Smith told reporters on Friday that the tariffs should exclude Mexico and Canada because of the trilateral trade agreement "and because we are strategic allies of the United States...and we are going to maintain that position."

[Reuters](#) (3/2, Boadle) reports the Brazilian government also "expressed 'enormous concern' about the proposed U.S. tariffs and said Brazil may take 'multilateral or bilateral' action to protect its interests." Milton Rego, president of the Brazilian Aluminum Association, acknowledged that Brazil is not a big exporter of aluminum to the US, but he told Reuters, "Brazil has to watch out. This is a fight between elephants in a small room and, at the first move, someone else is going to get thrown out of the window." Reuters notes "Brazil is the second-largest source of steel imports into the United States after Canada, accounting for 13 percent of volume in 2017, and its steel industry risks significant damage from U.S. tariffs." [Reuters](#) (3/2, Boadle) says that the country's main industry lobby, CNI, in a statement on Friday said the tariffs "violate World Trade Organization rules and called on the Brazilian government to fight them and retaliate if possible."

[Reuters](#) (3/2, Chung, Westbrook) reports Australian Trade Minister Steven Ciobo warned a tariff "will do nothing other than distort trade and ultimately, we believe, will lead to a loss of

jobs.” Japanese Trade and Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko called for additional “clarification” from the Administration and said, “I don’t think exports of steel and aluminum from Japan, which is a U.S. ally, damages U.S. national security in any way, and we would like to explain that to the U.S.” Reuters adds that “South Korea, the third-largest steel exporter to the United States after Canada and Brazil, said it will keep talking to U.S. officials until Washington’s plans for tariffs are finalised.” India’s Steel Secretary Aruna Sharma told Reuters, “We have only 2 percent of our exports to U.S. so no immediate dent, but validity of Section 232 is stretched to be used as a tariff barrier.”

However, the [AP](#) (3/2, Boak) reports that in contrast to many US allies, “China – the world’s largest steel producer and Trump’s primary target – stayed quiet about how it would respond” to tariffs. The [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Denyer) says China “reacted with cautious criticism Friday to President Trump’s plan to impose tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, urging the United States to abide by multilateral trade rules and do nothing to damage the fragile global economic recovery.”

Although the Chinese Commerce Ministry expressed “grave concern” about the US attempting to pressure the government, the [AP](#) (3/2) acknowledges that the ministry “had no immediate response to President Donald Trump’s plan to hike tariffs on steel and aluminum.” In another article, the [AP](#) (3/3, McDonald) reports Wang Hejun, head of the Chinese Commerce Ministry’s trade remedy and investigation bureau, vowed, “If the final measures of the United States hurt Chinese interests, China will work with other affected countries in taking measures to safeguard its own rights and interests.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Wei) highlights that the tariffs follow an unsuccessful month of intense lobbying by Chinese officials to convince the President not to pursue the protectionist trade policy.

Meanwhile, [Reuters](#) (3/2, Ivanova) reports “Russian metals and mining companies face relatively little harm from any introduction of U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, analysts and company representatives said on Friday.” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the Russian government shares the concerns of European officials and asserted the Kremlin is “carefully analyzing the situation which is forming in trade relations after this statement.” [Reuters](#) (3/2, Golubkova) cites Interfax in reporting that Russian Deputy Prime-Minister Arkady Dvorkovich predicted “some damage to Russia” from the tariffs, but he forecast “the damage to Russia would be less than to the European Union or China.”

**S&P 500 Gains On Friday But Posts Weekly Losses Over Fears Of Trade War.** [Reuters](#) (3/2, Valetkevitch) reports that on Friday, the “major indexes posted their worst week of losses since early February,” as the tariff “rattled investors.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Gold, Erheriene) says the losses extended to foreign indexes, with the [New York Times](#) (3/2, Bray, Phillips) reporting that “the Nikkei 225 in Japan fell 2.5 percent, and the Hang Seng Index in Hong Kong closed down 1.5 percent” while “the CAC 40 in France and the Xetra Dax 30 in Germany declined by more than 2 percent.”

However, [CNBC](#) (3/2, Imbert, Gibbs) reports “U.S. stocks closed well off session lows on Friday, helped by a sharp rise in health care shares.” CNBC says the S&P 500 “ended 0.5 percent higher at 2,691.25 after falling more than 1 percent,” the Nasdaq composite “rose 1.1 percent to 7,257.87 [after falling] as much as 1.3 percent,” and the Dow Jones Industrial Average “closed 70.92 points lower at 24,538.06 after falling as much as 391 points.”

Meanwhile, [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Tomesco) reports Michael Sabia, the head of Caisse de Depot et Placement du Quebec, Canada’s second-biggest pension fund manager, warned that the tariffs “would add to a ‘cocktail of uncertainty’ that threatens to slow business investment, stoke inflation and derail global growth, said the head of Canada’s second-biggest pension fund manager.”

**Experts Warn Tariff Likely To Backfire On Economy.** Despite Trump’s assertion on Twitter that “trade wars are good, and easy to win,” the [New York Times](#) (3/2, Tankersley) reports “many economists say the opposite: that even the prospect of a trade war will hurt the economic expansion that is underway and that Mr. Trump loves to take credit for.”

Writing in the [New York Times](#) (3/2, Irwin) “The Upshot” blog, Neil Irwin characterizes the Wall Street and corporate concerns over the tariff as “a signal about the willingness of the president to ignore his most sober-minded advisers and put the global economy at risk to achieve his goal of better terms for American trade.” Irwin adds that “Trump not only overruled his more pro-trade advisers, but he also did so in an impromptu way, seemingly setting policy before the details had been worked out and without buy-in from across his own administration. And by invoking national security concerns as the rationale for the action, the president was setting a precedent that could give other countries more wiggle room to use security as a reason for imposing tariffs on American goods.”

In addition, according to [Reuters](#) (3/2, Leong), "should China, Japan and other nations, which have recycled their trade dollars through their Treasuries holdings, suddenly decide to whittle them down" in response to the tariffs, "markets could be in for a rough ride." Reuters adds that "such a retaliatory move, in the wake of Trump's first big protectionist action, comes at a time when foreign demand for U.S. debt is seen critical to offset an expected surge in federal borrowing needs, analysts and investors said on Friday."

Meanwhile, [Reuters](#) (3/2, Schneider, Saphir) reports the tariff proposal, when coupled with the new tax law and infrastructure plan, "could saddle the U.S. central bank with the worst of both worlds – rising inflation and a slowing global economy." Reuters adds "the combination of fiscal stimulus, which Fed officials viewed as hardly a game-changer for monetary policy, and a brewing trade war is a recipe for the sort of no-win situation central bankers faced in the 1970s when they had to stomach high inflation or run the risk that interest rate increases would trigger a recession."

In a separate article, [Reuters](#) (3/2, Graham, Ljunggren) says the President's remarks about the tariff has also "blunted efforts to renegotiate the 1990s-era North American Free Trade Agreement, which had already been disrupted by the early departure of a U.S. official handling one of the most divisive subjects, content rules for autos." [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Wingrove, Martin) similarly reports "Trump's latest trade salvo...landed squarely in the middle of Nafta talks, overshadowing efforts by his own negotiators and those from his biggest export markets to update America's most important free-trade agreement."

**Editorials Uniformly Critical Of Trump's Tariff Proposal.** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/2) warns "President Trump's improvised announcement of stiff tariffs on steel and aluminum imports" threatens to undermine the "commitments forged among men and women, over decades, across the Atlantic and the Pacific, determined to learn the lessons of the 20th century so as to prevent a repeat of its horrors." While "the saving grace of Mr. Trump's chaotic leadership style is that it sometimes leaves room for backtracking" and "there might still be time for damage control," the Post concedes "any refinement of Mr. Trump's tariff plan would be a distant second-best solution." However, the Post concludes "even that is unachievable unless Mr. Trump compromises on the ideological objective that motivated his outburst in the first place."

The [New York Times](#) (3/2) editorializes "Trump has been spoiling for a trade war since before his election," but as he takes "the first meaningful step" in that direction, the President shows he has "little understanding" of the consequences of his actions. The Times contends "if Mr. Trump were truly interested in getting China to reduce its excess production, he would have worked with the European Union, Canada, Japan, South Korea and other countries to put pressure on Beijing," but instead the President "angered American allies with this move." The Times concludes that while "the steel and aluminum tariffs might, on their own, have only a small impact on the economy," many experts are worried "Trump is just getting started and will impose new tariffs on a host of other imports, sending the United States into a much broader trade war, the likes of which the world hasn't seen since the Great Depression. That would have a large and devastating economic impact, in the United States and around the globe."

In an scathing editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2) denounces the proposed tariffs as potentially one of the biggest mistakes of Trump's presidency. The Journal also dismisses Trump's defense of the policy on Twitter as ignorant of the realities of international trade and economics.

In an editorial, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/2) similarly contends "neither Trump nor some of his key advisors are being realistic about the consequences of a trade war." The Times says that while "you can't fault Trump for wanting to help the workers whose lives have been disrupted" by changing global trade patterns, "they would be well served by far better U.S. efforts to enforce global trade rules and to retrain workers for new careers." The Times warns Trump's proposal "won't provide the relief he's promising. Instead, it's bound to make things worse for everyone." The Times concludes "trade wars, like shooting wars, are waged to inflict casualties. And like shooting wars, they tend to escalate. So the best approach is not to start one."

### **After Meeting With NRA, White House Says Trump Is Not Yet Decided On What Gun Control Measures He Supports.**

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders on Friday said President Trump has not yet decided what gun control measures his Administration will support, an announcement that a handful of media outlets highlighted follows a private meeting with officials from the National Rifle Association on Thursday night. While reporting was limited, coverage characterized her remarks as suggesting the President is backing away from his comments on Wednesday expressing support for several proposals opposed by the NRA and GOP leaders.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Nakamura), for example, says "the White House appeared to



soften its tone on gun-control measures" after Trump's private meeting with NRA officials. The Post reports Sanders "said Trump still supports raising the age limit to buy assault rifles from 18 to 21 but added that he understands there is 'not a lot of broad support' for such a proposal." She added, "I think he thinks it would probably have more potential in the states than it would at the federal level." She also said that when it comes to background checks, "Trump does not necessarily support universal background checks 'but certainly improving the background check system. He wants to see what that legislation, the final piece of it looks like. 'Universal' means something different to a lot of people.'" The [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Boyer, Persons) reports she said Trump "will not support the so-called Toomey-Manchin gun bill on background checks until lawmakers finalize the details."

However, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Andrews, Radnofsky, Peterson) reports Sanders continued, "In terms of what legislation, as of right now he supports the Cornyn legislation." The [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Sherfinski) reports Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn on Friday told reporters that Trump called him on Thursday evening to confirm his support for the bipartisan legislation, which would "incentivize states and federal agencies to share more of their records with the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS)." The [AP](#) (3/2, Lucey) reports Sanders also stated that Trump supports "a bill that would provide new federal grant funding to stem school violence."

Meanwhile, [ABC World News Tonight](#)'s (3/2, story 5, 2:55, Muir) Mary Bruce reported "the about-face is what Democrats had feared and predicted." While Bruce added that Democrats on Friday "blast[ed] the President for changing his tune," [Reuters](#) (3/2, Chiacu) says Senate Minority Leader Schumer urged Trump to "go with his instincts, not the clarion and destructive call of the NRA." Schumer added the President "knows instinctively that this is the right thing to do both substantively, because it will save tens of thousands of lives, and politically, because over three quarters of the American people support it."

The [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Persons) reports "Sen. Chris Murphy, a noted critic of President Trump," on Friday [tweeted](#), "Trump may not end up leading Congressional Republicans to water on guns, but his willingness to buck the gun lobby in public, rule out the NRA agenda, and talk up background checks, has changed this debate nationally."

**DeVos Awards \$1 Million Grant To Aid Parkland School District.** The [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Richardson) reports Education Secretary DeVos on Friday announced the Department of Education will award a Project School Emergency Response to Violence (Project SERV) grant "to the Broward County Public Schools in Florida in the aftermath of last month's deadly shooting, starting with a \$1 million grant." In a statement, DeVos said, "My heart is broken for the students, teachers and families who have had to endure this unthinkable tragedy." DeVos added, "I am committed to helping identify solutions to prevent another tragedy like this one from happening again."

**Lawmakers In At Least 24 States Considering "Red Flag" Bills.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Kamp, Mahtani) reports lawmakers in at least 24 states are promoting legislation to allow courts to temporarily take the guns from people considered to be imminently dangerous.

However, [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Olorunnipa, Edgerton, Stohr) reports Trump "hit a nerve with gun-rights enthusiasts this week after suggesting firearms should be confiscated from potentially dangerous people without a court's approval, remarks that raised concerns among conservatives about his respect for the concept of due process." According to Bloomberg, "his remarks cut to a visceral fear of the most ardent supporters of gun rights: the government seizing weapons from law-abiding citizens." Bloomberg says the comments "also revealed an exceedingly rare divide between Trump and Vice President Mike Pence," who said during the meeting that it is important to "allow due process, so that no one's rights are trampled." Bloomberg adds Pence said the proper steps is "to go to court, obtain an order, and then collect not only the firearms, but any weapons in the possession of that individual," but Trump argued that law enforcement officials should instead "take the guns first, go through due process second."

[The Hill](#) (3/2, Bowden) reports Fox News anchor Shepard Smith on Friday "denounced" Trump's proposal "as un-American as imaginable." Smith asked, "Is there anyone there who is able to discern what has happened and why these things keep coming out in these ways that really end up usually walked back and are bordering on nonsensical?"

**Local Officials Embrace "Novel Efforts" To Improve School Security, But Experts Warn That Florida Proposals May Be Ineffective.** The [AP](#) (3/2, Yonker, Melia) reports that "in the jittery aftermath of the shooting in Parkland, Florida, novel efforts to ramp up school security are flying fast as districts across the United States respond to heightened fears as well as threats and rumors of violence that have only seemed to multiply since the latest tragedy."

In a front-page article, the [New York Times](#) (3/2, A1, Bosman) similarly reports many communities are increasingly “navigating a fine, sometimes blurred, line between vigilance and overreaction.” According to the Times, “attentive school administrators are facing a daily dilemma: Take every possible threat seriously and risk a needless disruption to the school day, a noisy police response and a crush of worried parents. Or, ignore what could be a real threat and risk the nightmare of your school becoming the next Parkland.”

However, [Politico](#) (3/2, Glorioso) reports “experts say” that proposals in Florida to increase funding for the state’s mental health programs by up to \$138 million “would do little to stop the next Nikolas Cruz” and “would create a parallel ‘shadow mental health system’ in which schools, instead of the state’s already underfunded system, are duplicating services and trying to handle kids like Cruz with general mental health provisions that would be woefully inadequate.” In addition, Politico states that “even in the current system, there’s no uniform assessment tool that can reliably predict who’s just an angry young man and who’s a budding mass shooter – a task that becomes even more complicated in a state awash in firearms and a patchwork of ad hoc mental health services that the state doesn’t fully fund or closely track in some cases.” Meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Hughes, Campo-Flores) reports that by endorsing several gun control measures, Florida Gov. Rick Scott may have derailed his expected bid for the Senate later this year.

**Outdoor Retailers to Stop Sales Of Gun Maker With NRA Ties.** The [New York Times](#) (3/2, Creswell) reports outdoor retail cooperatives Recreational Equipment Inc. (REI) and Mountain Equipment Co-Op on Thursday said “they were suspending orders for popular items like Bell bicycle helmets and CamelBak water bottles from the company that owns the brands, Vista Outdoor, because Vista also makes assault-style rifles,” and according to the [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Flynn), because Vista “has a strong connection to the National Rifle Association.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, Nassauer) reports Vista had spent more than \$1 billion to buy several consumer brands to help diversify its business away from guns, but [Bloomberg News](#) (3/2, Bhasin, Mosendz) says the backlash against the company comes “as part of a growing public revulsion to the Florida high school massacre and the gun lobby’s defensive response.” Bloomberg highlights that “even some of Vista’s own brands are trying to distance themselves from their parent company.”

**L.L. Bean Joins Kroger, Walmart In Raising Minimum Age For Gun Sales.** [Reuters](#) (3/2, Cavale) reports L.L. Bean on Thursday announced that it will join Kroger Co, Walmart Inc., and Dick’s Sporting Goods Inc. in raising the minimum age for buying guns and ammunition from 18 to 21, but “said it sold firearms only at its flagship store in Maine and those guns only focused on hunting.” The company on Friday highlighted that “it does not sell assault-style firearms, high-capacity firearms, bump stocks or handguns.”

However, the [New York Times](#) (3/2, Hsu) concedes that whether changes like this “will actually have a meaningful effect on gun sales is difficult – if not impossible – to know.” The Times highlights that “in an era when the toy industry can pinpoint the overall value of all dolls sold domestically each year and the federal government tracks the number of trucks sold in any given month, data on gun sales is obscured by foggy reporting standards and loopholes.” The Times adds “there is no nationwide registry that tracks gun ownership while firearms are available to purchase from a decentralized network of retailers, shows and individuals that operate publicly, privately, online and offline.”

**WSJournal A1: BlackRock Publicizes Concerns With Gun Industry.** In a front-page article, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/2, A1, Krouse) reports BlackRock Inc., the largest money manager by assets in the world, posted on its website a list of questions for gun makers and sellers. According to [Reuters](#) (3/2, Kerber), BlackRock also disclosed that “it is studying the creation of new index-based portfolios of stocks that would exclude gunmakers and retailers,” which amounts to “the most detailed critical stance by a big financial firm after last month’s deadly high school shooting in Florida.” Reuters states that “were it to launch the new portfolios, the step in theory might reduce demand for industry stocks given the firm’s leading stakes in companies like American Outdoor Brands Corp and Sturm Ruger & Co..”

**Delta Swears Off Discounts To All “Politically Divisive” Groups Following Backlash For Cutting NRA Ties.** The [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Lac, Eltagouri) reports Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian, “caught in a maelstrom over his company’s decision to cut ties with the National Rifle Association,” on Friday announced the company will end all discounts “for any group of a politically divisive nature.” The [New York Times](#) (3/2, Hsu) reports Bastian in a memo to employees asserted, “Our people and our customers have a wide range of views on how to increase safety in our schools and public places, and we are not taking sides.” He added: “Our

decision was not made for economic gain and our values are not for sale." [Reuters](#) (3/2, Wise) reports Bastian also insisted "Delta's intent was to remain neutral," even though "some elected officials in Georgia" had demanded the airline reinstate the NRA discount in exchange for a tax break on jet fuel.

The [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Richardson) reports Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal signed the legislation "that eliminated a lucrative tax break" for the airline on Friday, but Delta "insisted that there are no hard feelings." In a statement, Bastian said, "I have tremendous respect and admiration for Governor Nathan Deal, and thank him for the work he has done on the jet fuel tax exemption." Bastian added, "He is a great friend to Delta. I know this action by the state legislature troubled him as it does all of us."

According to the [AP](#) (3/3, Nadler, Rico), the decision by lawmakers in Georgia "to punish Delta Air Lines for publicly distancing itself from the National Rifle Association was an extraordinary act of political revenge" that could backfire on the state. The AP adds that "by killing a proposed tax break on jet fuel, pro-gun Republicans won a political victory that could pay off in the short term, but other companies won't soon forget that Georgia allied itself with the NRA over one of its largest private employers, with 33,000 workers statewide."

Meanwhile, the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/2, story 10, 0:20, Glor) and [USA Today](#) (3/2, Jansen) report that only 13 passengers had ever used the NRA discount.

***NRA Membership, Influence Is Unlikely To Decline Despite Corporate Boycotts, Analysts Predict.*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/2, Fisher) reports that while "the National Rifle Association is, like AAA or AARP, a bundle of bargains, a smorgasbord of savings on insurance policies, motel rooms, bottles of wine and prescription drugs," the NRA differs from these interest groups because it "unabashedly embraces controversy, lunging into battle with fiery rhetoric and no-holds-barred political attacks." The Post says that while businesses "that have cut ties with the NRA include big brand names such as car-rental giant Enterprise, Delta Air Lines, MetLife insurance and the bank behind an NRA Visa credit card," the group "is unlikely to lose a significant number of members or see its influence diminished, according to those who have studied the organization." The Post adds "supporters and critics say the NRA is cushioned against this kind of pushback because its members sign up not for financial gain but for a chance to be part of a cultural vanguard."

***DNC Enlists Parkland Survivor In 2018 Voter Drive.*** The [Washington Times](#) (3/2, Richardson) reports "the Democratic National Committee has enlisted at least one shooting survivor to campaign on its behalf," as the DNC on Friday "issued a get-out-the-vote email...signed by Sara Imam, who wrote a first-person plea urging people to join the Democratic Party's #IWillVote campaign in order to commit to 'ending gun violence.'"

***Everytown For Gun Safety Pledges \$2.5 Million For Marches To End School Shootings.*** [Reuters](#) (3/2, Allen) reports Everytown for Gun Safety "said on Friday it will donate up to \$2.5 million to support marches around the United States on March 24, the date of a planned March For Our Lives in Washington to demand an end to school shootings."

***Poll: 75 Percent Want Stricter Gun Laws; 59 Percent Oppose Arming Teachers.*** [NPR](#) (3/2, Khalid) reports a new NPR/Ipsos poll of 1,005 adults nationwide, conducted Feb. 27-28, found 75 percent of respondents "said gun laws should be stricter than they are today," up from the October 2017 NPR poll "conducted...in the wake of the Las Vegas shooting," when "68 percent said gun laws should be stricter than they were." NPR adds, "The poll also found widespread bipartisan support for a range of gun-control policies, including: requiring background checks for all gun buyers (94 percent), adding people with mental illnesses to the federal gun background check system (92 percent), raising the legal age to purchase guns from 18 to 21 (82 percent), banning bump stocks (81 percent), banning high-capacity ammunition magazines that hold more than 10 rounds (73 percent) and banning assault-style weapons (72 percent)." Meanwhile, 59 percent said they oppose "training teachers to carry guns in schools," which is "frequently touted by President Trump."

***Studies Show Many Gun Control Policies Ineffective, RAND Analysis Finds.*** The [Daily Caller](#) (3/2, Hagstrom) reports an analysis by the RAND Corporation of thousands of gun control studies found "just 63 of those studies found connections between more stringent gun control laws violent crime and suicide reductions." However, the Caller says the analysis "found some evidence that laws aimed at keeping firearms out of the hands of small children had some effect on rates of suicide and accidental gun injuries."

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## Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

***"Donald Trump Sure Has A Problem With Democracy."*** A [New York Times](#) (3/4) editorial says Trump's "craven reaction" to President Xi Jinping decision to extend his own rule until death is not only "in line" with his "consistent support and even admiration for men ruling with increasing brutal and autocratic methods," but also a reinforcement of how he "just doesn't get" America's "proud history" of protecting against such despotic moves. Unlike past presidents who "have combined efforts to deepen relations with China with advocacy for expanding human rights there," the Times says, Trump "clearly sees no national interest or responsibility in trying to promote democracy." Since Trump "has also proven ignorant of and impatient with checks on presidential power" in the US, the Times says, it is ultimately up to American voters "to fulfill Washington's hopes for the resilience of the American system."

### **Washington Post.**

***"Gratuitous Cruelty By Homeland Security: Separating A 7-Year-Old From Her Mother."*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/4) says the "cruel practice" of "separating parents from their children as a means of deterring other families, most of them Central American, from undertaking the perilous trip necessary to reach the United States and seek asylum," has become "increasingly common, immigrant advocacy groups say." The Post highlights the case of a 7-year-old Congolese girl who was forcibly separated from her mother and questions if this is the "kind of protection Americans want from their Department of Homeland Security."

***"The UN Human Rights Commissioner Says Shame Is In Retreat. He's Right."*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/4) praises Zeid Raad al-Hussein, whose term as UN high commissioner for human rights will soon end, for saying, "Today...oppression is fashionable again, the security state is back, and fundamental freedoms are in retreat in every region of the world. Shame is also in retreat. Xenophobes and racists in Europe are casting off any sense of embarrassment." Quoting Zeid as saying, "it is the accumulating human rights violations such as these, and not a lack of GDP growth, which will spark the conflicts that can break the world. .... Why are we doing so little to stop them," the Post says there is "no more relevant question" today.

***"Democracy Is Dying In Cambodia. Facebook Should Make Sure It Doesn't Help Kill It."*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/4) says Cambodian prime minister Hun Sen, "who has been relentlessly crushing democratic forces and grinding down civil society," has "9.5 million 'likes' on his Facebook page, nearly twice the number of Facebook users in Cambodia." Opposition leader Sam Rainsy "has filed suit in California federal district court, demanding information about Hun Sen's transactions with Facebook, insisting the prime minister's popularity is not authentic." The Post says "the manipulation of Facebook by autocrats raises worrisome questions," adding that while it "says it is committed to fighting the fake 'likes' and the 'bad actors,'" what will it do "if the bad actor is the leader of a nation? It ought not to neglect this challenge, however vexing." In Cambodia, the Post argues, "Democracy is dying in Cambodia at the hands of a despot, and it would be a double tragedy if Facebook helped, however unwittingly."

### **Wall Street Journal.**

***"The Qualcomm Question."*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/4) argues in an editorial Broadcom Ltd.'s Hostile bid to buy Qualcomm Inc. deserves scrutiny by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the US regardless of Broadcom CEO Hock Tan's promise to President Trump that he would move Broadcom's headquarters from Singapore to the US.

***"Steel Tariffs Without Jobs."*** In an editorial this morning, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/4) roundly dismisses the notion that President Trump's tariffs will revive a steel industry which, according to the Journal, no longer exists as a significant segment of the economy.

***"The Italian Indecision."*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/4) editorializes that the outcome of Sunday's election in Italy, while not surprising, is unlikely to bring a close to the economic crisis that has embroiled Italy for roughly seven years. The Journal says the results clearly indicate that immigration was a key issue among Italian voters, but those voters should not expect the resulting government to provide the economic answers that they desperately need.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today's Front Pages.**

***Wall Street Journal:***

[Trump Administration Beats Back Warnings On Tariffs](#)



[Europe's Fragile Center Takes New Blows](#)  
[How China's Geely Turned A Disassembled Mercedes Into A Global Car Company](#)  
[Uber Battles Ride-Sharing Startups In SoftBank 'Family'](#)

**New York Times:**

[School Officer: A Job With Many Roles And One Big Responsibility](#)  
[Divided Voters Weigh What It Means to Be a Democrat](#)  
[Election in Italy Gives Big Lift to Far Right and Populists](#)  
[Ben Carson On His Vexing Reign At HUD: Brain Surgery Was Easier Than This](#)  
[Roger Bannister, First Athlete to Break the 4-Minute Mile, Dies](#)  
[The Shift: Here Come The Fake Videos, Too](#)

**Washington Post:**

[The Jobs US-Born Workers Won't Take](#)  
['I Wonder: Am I Wanted?'](#)  
[Banking Rules Set To Loosen In Senate](#)  
[For Mayor, Problems Mount, Not Challengers](#)

**Financial Times:**

[Italians Head To Polls After Divisive Campaign](#)  
['No Exemptions' For Donald Trump's US Steel Tariffs](#)  
[Merkel Wins Backing For Grand Coalition](#)

**Washington Times:**

[Anti-Trump Bureaucrats Accused Of Weaponizing Security Clearance Process](#)  
[FBI Lacked Corroboration For Page Wiretap; Discredited Dossier Writer Steele ID'd As Yahoo Source](#)  
[China Opens Door To EU Influence Through Belt And Road's Divisive Investments](#)  
[CDC Tackles Crisis Worse Than HIV/AIDS: Opioid Overdoses](#)  
[Trump Boosts Dreamer Approvals As DACA Deadline Passes](#)  
[Trump Won't Back Down On Tariffs Despite Widespread Fears Of Trade War](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Preempted by Academy Awards.

**CBS:** ISIS-Niger Attack; Tariff Policy; Gun Control Bill; Severe Weather; WV-Teachers Strike; Academy Awards-Me Too Movement; Track Athlete Dies; Syrian Civil War; Alzheimer-Archivist; Women For Congress; Film Prop Sale.

**NBC:** Tariff Policy; Tariff Policy-Asia; Tariff Policy-Europe; ISIS-Niger Attack; Italy Elections; WV-Teachers Strike; Florida-Gun Bill; Severe Weather-Power Outages; Weather Forecast; Colorado Wildfire; Academy Awards-Me Too Movement; Track Athlete Dies; TV Actor Dies; Academy Awards Ceremony; CDC Missing Employee; Alabama-Civil Rights Commemoration; Ice Cream CEO Arrested; Girl Scouts.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Tariff Policy – 5 minutes, 40 seconds  
Academy Awards-Me Too Movement – 4 minutes  
WV-Teachers Strike – 3 minutes, 55 seconds  
ISIS-Niger Attack – 2 minutes, 55 seconds  
Severe Weather – 2 minutes, 45 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Academy Awards; Severe Weather; Historical Film.

**CBS:** Academy Awards; Severe Weather; WV-Teachers Strike; Tariff Policy.

**FOX:** Academy Awards; Tariff Policy; Papua New Guinea Earthquake.

**NPR:** Syrian Civil War; Italy Elections; Academy Awards.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Prime Minister Netanyahu; meets with US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — No public schedule announced.

**US Senate:** 3:00 PM Senate votes on district judges nominees – Senate convenes and proceeds to executive session to resume consideration of the nominations of Karen Gren Scholer to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, Tilman Eugene Self III to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Georgia, and Terry Doughty to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, with agenda including votes on the nominations \* Motions to invoke cloture on the nominations passed (by 96-1 for Scholer, 85-12 for Self, and 94-2 for Doughty) last week Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 11:30 AM Bipartisan House members call on OMB to withdraw plan 'putting 9/11 health program at risk' – 9/11 Health Program beneficiaries and advocates call on Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney to withdraw his 'ill-thought out proposal to separate the World Trade Center Health Program from National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) direction'. Participants include Democratic Reps. Carolyn Maloney and Jerrold Nadler, Republican Rep. Peter King, comedian Jon Stewart, UFA Local 94 IAFF President Gerard Fitzgerald, UFOA Local 854 IAFF President Jake Lemonda, AFL-CIO Health and Safety Officer Peg Seminario, Northwell Health Queens WTC Program Director Dr Jackie Moline, former Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent Terence Opiola, and former FDNY Emergency Medical Technician Salvatore Turturici Location: House Triangle, Washington, DC [maloney.house.gov](http://maloney.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/RepMaloney>

2:00 PM House of Representatives meets for legislative business Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

5:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on 'H.R. 1917 – Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2017' and 'H.R. 1119 – Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act' Location: U.S. Capitol, H-313, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

**Other:** 9:00 AM World Bank President Jim Yong Kim speaks at 'Managing Risks for Peace and Stability' discussion – World Bank President Jim Yong Kim delivers opening remarks at the Fragility Forum strategic discussion on 'Managing Risks for Peace and Stability' Location: The World Bank, 1818 H St NW, Washington, DC [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org) <https://twitter.com/WorldBank>

HHS Secretary Azar addresses Federation of American Hospitals – Federation of American Hospitals Public Policy Conference and Business Exposition. Day two speakers include Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, Democrats Sen. Tim Kaine and Rep. Kyrsten Sinema, Republicans Sen. Todd Young and Rep. Peter Roskam, and Domestic Policy Council Director Andrew Bremberg Location: Washington Marriott Wardman Park, 2660 Woodley Rd NW, Washington, DC <http://fah.org/> <https://twitter.com/FedAmerHospital>

AIPAC Policy Conference continues – American Israel Public Affairs Committee Policy Conference – 'preeminent annual gathering of the pro-Israel community' – continues. Speakers during conference include Vice President Mike Pence, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Education Minister and Diaspora Affairs Minister Naftali Bennett, and Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Amb. Nikki Haley, USAID Administrator Mark Green, House Chief Deputy Majority Whip Patrick McHenry, Democratic Sen. Ben Cardin, bipartisan Reps. Anthony Brown, Ted Deutch, Eliot Engel, Jaime Herrera Beutler, Trent Kelly, Brian Mast, Seth Moulton, Stephanie Murphy, Jimmy Panetta, Robert Pittenger, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Ed Royce, Adam Schiff, Brad Sherman, Scott Taylor, and Lee Zeldin, Estonian Foreign Affairs Minister Sven Mikser, Albanian PM Edi Rama, Togolese Foreign Affairs Minister Robert Dussey, Chief Archivist of the United States David Ferriero, Arizona State Rep. Daniel Hernandez Jr., and Let America Vote founder Jason Kander Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC [www.policyconference.org](http://www.policyconference.org) [#AIPAC2018](https://twitter.com/AIPAC)

Secretaries Chao and Shulkin address National Association of Counties Legislative Conference – National Association of Counties Legislative Conference. Day three speakers include Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, Secretary of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin, U.S. Acting Special Representative for Commercial and Business Affairs Scott Ticknor, and International Trade Administration Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee Director Patrick Kirwan Location: Washington Hilton, 1919 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org) [#NACoLeg](https://twitter.com/NACoTweets)

Secretary Carson speaks at National Council of State Housing Agencies Legislative Conference – National Council of State Housing Agencies Legislative Conference, with Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson delivering remarks today, sharing 'his thoughts about HUD's affordable housing initiatives and the challenges and opportunities facing HUD and

HFA's. Speakers today also include Democratic Reps. David Price and Emanuel Cleaver, and Republican Rep. Randy Hultgren Location: Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC [www.ncsha.org](http://www.ncsha.org) <https://twitter.com/HomeEverything>

Barack Obama keynotes CRT Conference – CRT (Cardiovascular Research Technologies) Conference continues, with a keynote speech from former President Barack Obama Location: Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.crtonline.org/> [https://twitter.com/CRT\\_meeting](https://twitter.com/CRT_meeting)

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

*John Oliver:* "We begin with the Trump Administration, which is like a circus in that nothing about it is funny and I badly want it to end. This week, even by current White House standards, was such a mess we don't even have time to get into Mueller's investigation heating up or Trump flip-flopping on gun reform or the President's ongoing spat with his attorney general."

*John Oliver:* [Referring to President Trump's comment on proposed tariffs] "Yes, trade wars are good and easy to win, which is weird, because if that was true, everyone would always win them, in which case they'd actually be hard to win, because everyone else would already have won them."

*John Oliver:* "Our main story tonight concerns the NRA, a group that feels about guns the way the rest of us feel about Nutella. A little is good, more is better. And you can tell me it's bad for me all you like, but you have to pry it from my cold, dead hands."

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## DOI In The News

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### US Lands Agency Makeover Would Diminish Washington's Power.

In an interview with the [AP](#) (2/24, Brown, Elliott) on Friday, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "disclosed...that he's revamping a sweeping overhaul of his department that's supposed to speed up permitting for development on public lands, but Democrats asserted it was just a ploy to let the energy industry get its way." Zinke stated, "At present we are mismanaging and squandering our assets through a layered bureaucracy that reflects a very old department that really has not reorganized since the turn of the last century." Zinke added, "We will be moving assets to the front lines and moving authority to make decisions and, I would argue, better decisions to the front lines."

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/23, Streater, Doyle) reports that Zinke has "redrawn his ambitious plan for reorganizing the Interior Department after the agency received numerous complaints from Western leaders and members of Congress that splitting up states into multiple regions would cause more harm than good." Facing criticism from "governors of both parties – who objected to not being consulted on maps released last month proposing to divide management of millions of federal acres into 13 regions along boundaries of watersheds and basins – Zinke is now proposing to largely follow state lines more closely in setting up new management territories." The new map still reorganizes the department "into 13 regions but avoids splitting up states like Colorado, Wyoming and Utah into multiple regions, as proposed in a map released last month during a two-day meeting in Washington with about 150 Interior senior executives." Heather Swift, an Interior spokeswoman, said, "The new maps represent the feedback [Zinke] solicited from veteran

officials at Interior, Congress and States and they are the latest draft for discussion.”

Also reporting are the [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (2/23), [PBS NewsHour](#) (2/23, Brown, Elliot), the [Missoula Current \(MT\)](#) (2/23, Renda), and the [Westerner](#) (2/24, DuBois).

### **Energy, Interior Secretaries: Trump Has ‘World-Changing’ Approach To Energy.**

[The Hill](#) (2/23, Green) reports Energy Secretary Rick Perry and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke in a panel discussion at the Conservative Political Action Conference on Friday “credited President Trump for major changes they say have made American energy stronger.” Perry said, “We have a role to play in balancing the regulations. This president and this administration, what he has done on the regulatory side has been nothing less than world changing.” Perry added, “What is happening in energy today is the confirmation of the conservative movement in my opinion, because we have innovators who didn’t believe in relying on the government.” Meanwhile, Zinke “seized upon ‘transformative’ regulations under the president,” and he asserted, “Environmentally, it is better to produce energy here under reasonable regulations than to see it produced overseas with none.” Zinke also “mentioned Interior’s new reorganization plans as well as a plan unveiled in the White House’s recent budget to initiate a multibillion-dollar upgrade to infrastructure projects.” He said, “We’re going to embark on what is called Mission 26, our largest investment in our public lands and park system in the history of this country. And it’s going to be funded from energy.”

Also reporting are the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/23, Siciliano), [Fox News](#) (2/24), [Fox News](#) (2/23), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/23, D’Angelo), [Breitbart](#) (2/23, Starr), and [Breitbart](#) (2/24, Klukowski).

### **Interior Secretary Brings Mine Reclamation Funds To Area.**

The [Greene County \(PA\) Observer-Reporter](#) (2/24, Shrum) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke “appeared at East Bethlehem Volunteer Fire Company to announce his department is providing \$300.7 million to states and Indian tribes to reclaim abandoned coal mine land nationwide.” Zinke “signed a ceremonial large check for \$300.7 million, the grants to be divided among 25 states, the Crow and Hopi tribes and the Navajo Nation.” The article notes that “a full 18.5 percent of that total – \$55.7 million – is earmarked for Pennsylvania, the second largest disbursement behind only Wyoming (\$91.3 million, 30.3 percent). West Virginia (\$36.3 million) is third, followed by Kentucky (\$19.04 million), Illinois (19.02 million) and Ohio (\$10.8 million).”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (2/24, Linder) and the [Sierra \(CA\) Sun Times](#) (2/25).

Local TV coverage was provided by [WTAE-TV](#) ☐ Pittsburgh (2/24) and [WPXI-TV](#) ☐ Pittsburgh (2/25).

### **Second Judge Says Trump Can’t Keep Stalling Clean-Air Rules.**

The [AP](#) (2/23, Daly) reports District Judge William Orrick of the Northern District of California on Thursday “ordered the Interior Department to reinstate the Obama-era regulation aimed at restricting harmful methane emissions.” In his ruling, Orrick said the delay is “untethered to evidence” and is likely to cause “irreparable injury” to California, New Mexico, and other states. In an interview, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Friday “said that officials will carefully review the judge’s 29-page ruling,” but he insisted federal rules “are not intended to be adversarial” to the industry in the way that the “the Obama-era rule ‘penalizes oil and gas,’ while the Trump administration wants to encourage the industry to voluntarily find ways to capture and re-use methane.” [Reuters](#) (2/23, Heavey, Volcovici) mentions that Orrick also “denied the administration’s request to move the trial to another court venue in Wyoming.”

[NBC News](#) (2/24, Rainey) reports on its website that “the Obama-era rule regulated both methane released during gas production operations, including those involving hydraulic fracturing” and “gas released as a byproduct of oil drilling.” The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/24, Egelko) reports the judge’s “order applied only to the previous regulations and not to any new rules.”

Also reporting are the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/23, Siegel), [CNBC](#) (2/23, DiChristopher), the [Farmington \(NM\) Daily Times](#) (2/25), the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/24, Webb), the [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (2/23, Richards), the [Carlsbad \(NM\) Current-Argus](#) (2/24, Hedden), and [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (2/23, Passut).

### **Group Seeks Investigation Into Zinke’s Ties To Gun Company.**

The [AP](#) (2/23) reports that a political watchdog group says Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke



"appears to have violated a conflict of interest law by meeting with executives of a Montana firearms company in which he holds stock." The Campaign Legal Center on Friday "asked the Interior Department's Inspector General to investigate Zinke's actions in relation to PROOF Research, which is based in Columbia Falls." Zinke spokeswoman Heather Swift "rejected the group's suggestion that he did something wrong." Swift says Zinke "owns 1,000 shares of PROOF stock, worth about \$250 to \$400 in total value" and "she described the meeting in Zinke's office with PROOF representatives last April as a 'social call' from fellow Montanans."

Additional coverage was provided by [Splinter News](#) (2/24, Boddiger).

### **Coal Jobs Get A Boost – From Exports.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/24, Maher) reports US thermal coal exports increased by 117 percent last year to 42 million tons, more than offsetting a long-term decline in coal used by American power plants to generate electricity. The stronger coal export market – attributed to attractive costs in Western Europe, increased coal use in developing nations, and a tightening of global supply – has prompted US coal companies in Indiana, Illinois, and western Kentucky to add jobs.

### **Additional Coverage: Interior Ramping Up Drone Use For Firefighting, Other Roles.**

Additional coverage of the report released last week about the Interior Department's drone missions was provided by the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/25, Webb) and [FedScoop](#) (2/23, Chappellet-Lanier).

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Easterns Critical Of State's Involvement With Gaming Tribes.**

The [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (2/23, Hallenbeck) reports that "Connecticut's close relationship with the casino-owning Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes continues to anger the Eastern Pequot Tribe." In a letter Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, "the Easterns take issue with a Connecticut congressional delegation's call for an investigation into the Department of the Interior's failure to act on state-tribe gaming amendments, a step that's critical to the gaming tribes' joint development of an East Windsor casino." Katherine Sebastian Dring, the Easterns' chairwoman, wrote in the letter to Zinke, "The Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation is appalled that Senator Blumenthal and Connecticut legislators are questioning lobbying tactics. ... CT used similar tactics in a destructive lobbying campaign to DOI lasting decades to prevent the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation from becoming federally recognized."

### **State Planning To Reopen Fishing On A River Owned By A Tribe.**

The [AP](#) (2/23) reports that Washington state officials are "looking to reopen salmon fishing on the Skokomish River this year." The Skokomish Tribe, "who controls the lower stretch of the river, began banning non-tribal anglers from fishing there in 2016 after the U.S. Department of Interior ruled that the river was part of its reservation." The state Attorney General's office is "looking to challenge the tribe's ownership of the river in court." Assistant Attorney General Mike Grossmann "said on Wednesday that because the state cannot sue the tribe or the federal government, it will try to provoke the federal government into suing the state by reopening recreation fishing on the river."

Additional coverage was provided by [KING-TV](#) Seattle (2/24, Sooter).

### **Cayuga Faction Can Step Into Rival Group's Suit Against BIA.**

[Law360](#) (2/23, Westney) reports that "a D.C. federal judge on Friday allowed a Cayuga Nation faction to step into a suit brought by a rival group within the New York tribe, saying the intervenors had the right to help defend the Bureau of Indian Affairs' recognition that they govern the tribe." The Cayuga Nation Council, "led by Clint Halftown, had asked the court in January to let it intervene as a defendant against another Cayuga Nation group claiming to represent the tribe."

### **9th Circ. OKs Toss Of Tribal Water Project Row.**

[Law360](#) (2/23, Phillis) reports that "the Ninth Circuit on Thursday affirmed a lower court's dismissal of a suit brought by an organization representing Montana landowners that disputes the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs' control of an irrigation project, agreeing that the court did not have jurisdiction over the matter." In an unpublished opinion, the court "said some of the claims being

challenged were up to the agency's discretion and therefore outside of the court's jurisdiction."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Gravel Pit Expansion To Affect Trails South Of Durango.**

The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/23) reports that the Bureau of Land Management's Tres Rios Field Office has "approved C&J Gravel's proposal to expand its gravel pit." The article notes that "the 46-acre expansion will affect trails in the Grandview Ridge trail system, which are popular among mountain bikers." It adds that "affected portions of existing trails will be re-routed, and C&J Gravel agreed to construct a new 'skills trail' at the spot of its existing pit that has run out of gravel." Tres Rios Field Manager Connie Clementson said, "We appreciate C&J Gravel's efforts to help us ensure high-quality recreational opportunities in the area as they expand their operation."

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **New Study Says Interior Department Offshore Leasing Procedures Require Reform.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/22) reports the Project on Government Oversight (POGO) released a new report on Thursday suggesting current federal offshore leasing procedures "fail to capture 'fair market value' on offshore tracts" and are "ripe for a redo." In its analysis, the report found that "[m]ore than 75 percent of leases BOEM has awarded in the Gulf of Mexico over the past 20 years attracted only a single bid." Moreover, "[t]he government consistently underestimated the market" and often received more money than it thought it would receive. The report asks, "[h]ow much more could the government have gotten if it set higher expectations or ran more competitive auctions?"

### **Sen. Markey To Hold Meeting To Discuss Offshore Drilling.**

The [AP](#) (2/25) reports that Sen. Edward Markey is "bringing together members of the fishing industry, tourism, environmental organizations and academia to discuss President Donald Trump's proposal to allow oil and gas drilling in coastal waters." Markey "says he's planning to discuss the proposal at the meeting he's sponsoring at the New England Aquarium IMAX Theater in Boston at 10 a.m. Monday." The meeting "comes a day before the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management holds a hearing in Boston Tuesday."

### **Federal Government Holds North Carolina Meeting On Drilling Proposal.**

The [AP](#) (2/26) reports that "the federal government's only scheduled public meeting in North Carolina to discuss expanding oil and gas exploration off the Atlantic coast and in other waters is expected to attract busloads of people opposing the idea." The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is "holding local events across the country about a proposal by President Donald Trump's administration to open more waters to drilling." Several environmental groups contesting expansion are "helping bring residents from the Outer Banks, Wilmington and elsewhere to rally and to speak with agency representatives."

### **Offshore Drilling Proposal Meeting Draws Supporters, Critics.**

The [AP](#) (2/24) reports that "Alaska residents had the opportunity to weigh in on the Trump administration's proposal to open federal waters near the state to oil and gas development," but "residents weren't able to voice their support or criticism in person," and "instead, they were directed to type in their comments on laptops that were provided." Some people "criticized the process and also that the meeting was in Anchorage instead of a location that would see the effects of offshore drilling." The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management "held the public meeting Wednesday for state residents to provide comment on the draft offshore drilling proposal."

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **'Glimmers Of Hope' At Reno Water Conference.**

The [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/25, Dillemoth) reports that Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman "met with a number of Klamath Basin irrigators gathered in Reno on Thursday, hearing directly about their concerns for the upcoming water year." Burman was

joined at the annual conference hosted by the Family Farm Alliance by David Bernhardt, deputy secretary of the Interior, Kiel Weaver, assistant to U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan, and a number of Reclamation officials. Dan Keppen, executive director of the Family Farm Alliance, said, "Here at this conference, there's so much encouragement and glimmers of hope, not only from other producers but our relationships with the Department of Interior."

### **Carlsbad Farmers Expecting Full Irrigation Allotment.**

The [AP](#) (2/24) reports that "officials say reservoirs in eastern New Mexico are full enough to provide a full allotment of irrigation water to farmers in the Carlsbad area." The Bureau of Reclamation "announced Thursday that it would begin moving water down the Pecos River from Brantley Reservoir to Avalon Reservoir next week."

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **Democrats Call For Renewed Offshore Safety Program.**

[UPI](#) (2/23, Graeber) reports a group of 19 Democratic US Senators called on the Department of the Interior to "continue rigorous inspection of offshore oil and gas development" and restart a Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement-sponsored study on offshore drilling safety. Previously, the BSEE "ordered the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine to stop work on a study evaluating inspection programs for offshore drilling operations" after the BSEE in December proposed changing offshore drilling safety regulations. In a statement, the Senators said, "BSEE's sudden cancellation of this review does not instill confidence as the administration tries to broaden offshore drilling opportunities." The [Dover \(DE\) Post](#) (2/23) reports Delaware Sens. Tom Carper and Chris Coons wrote a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke in support of resuming "a study of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement's inspection program for offshore oil and gas development." The report, which "has been underway since 2016 and has already had \$100,000 invested," would generate "recommendations for how best to minimize risks associated with drilling operations and help the Bureau make needed improvements to its safety and environmental stewardship programs."

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Virginia To Receive \$646k For Boating Infrastructure.**

The [AP](#) (2/23) reports that the Interior Department has "announced that Virginia will receive a grant of nearly \$407,000 to improve boating infrastructure and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation." The AP adds that "state partners will provide an additional \$239,000 in matching funds, bringing the total to about \$646,000." The grant announced last Friday is "part of \$14 million in Boating Infrastructure Grant funds being awarded nationwide."

### **Trout Hatchery Builds Toward Full Production.**

The [AP](#) (2/25, McCoy) reports that "it's been nearly two years since epic flood waters ripped through" West Virginia's White Sulphur Springs National Fish Hatchery, "contaminating its trout and trashing its infrastructure." According to the article, "most of the physical damage has been repaired, but another year and a half remains before the hatchery can fully resume its primary mission — providing rainbow trout eggs to hatcheries in 14 states." Tyler Hern, White Sulphur's lead fish biologist, "said the major repairs at White Sulphur have been completed, but a few items remain on the hatchery's to-do list."

### **3 Sisters Proposals In The Works.**

The [Citrus County \(FL\) Chronicle](#) (2/24, Thompson) reports that "officials with Crystal River and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) said they are making and approving final amendments to a pair of plans that seek to amend how the refuge is run and developed by the city and USFWS." City Manager Dave Burnell "said Wednesday that he and Joyce Palmer with USFWS recently met one-on-one with Crystal River City Council members to review the city's and USFWS's respective management plans, which are now undergoing changes based on council members' feedback." Palmer, "who manages the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge, which encompasses Three Sisters Springs, said Friday that both plans are expected to be presented to the city council during its March 12 meeting."

### **Additional Coverage: World's Oldest Albatross Hatches Another Chick At Midway.**

Additional coverage that "the world's oldest known breeding bird, a 67-year-old albatross named Wisdom, hatched another chick on Feb. 6, 2018" was provided by [Maui \(HI\) Now](#) (2/23), [Big Island \(HI\) Now](#) (2/23), [WTOP-FM Washington](#) Washington (2/23, Amouzadeh), and [KDRV-TV Medford \(OR\)](#) Medford, OR (2/23, Parfitt).

## **National Park Service**

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### **Alexander Will Introduce Bipartisan Legislation To Provide More Funding For National Parks.**

The [Chattanooga \(TN\)](#) (2/23) reports that Sen. Lamar Alexander "spoke with members of the Blount County Chamber of Commerce Friday about legislation he will introduce in the coming weeks to help address the \$215 million backlog of projects in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park." Alexander said, "President Trump and Secretary Zinke have made addressing the growing maintenance backlog a top priority, and I agree we have a responsibility to address the growing maintenance backlog in our national parks. This is an issue Congress has been focused on for many years, and working with Secretary Zinke, I hope to introduce legislation in the coming weeks with some of my colleagues to help restore and rebuild our parks."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (2/24, Whetstone). Also reporting on the maintenance backlog at national parks is the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (2/24, Giles).

### **Grounds Of Gateway Arch Get A New Name.**

The [AP](#) (2/23) reports that "the grounds of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis will now be officially known as The Gateway Arch National Park." President Trump last Thursday "signed a bill that renamed the former Jefferson National Expansion Memorial." [USA Today](#) (2/23, Today) reports that Mike Ward, Superintendent at the Gateway Arch National Park said, "The name 'Jefferson National Expansion Memorial' was established long before the Gateway Arch was envisioned, and has simply never been adopted by our millions of visitors. We hope this new name will best reflect the magnificent renovations and visitor experience we will unveil in a few months."

Also reporting are the [Columbia \(MO\) Missourian](#) (2/23) and the [St. Louis Patch](#) (2/23, Danielson).

### **Harriet Tubman National Park Visitors Shatter Projections.**

The [AP](#) (2/25, Cox) reports that the National Park Service and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, which run the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park together, "recorded more than 100,000 visitors in its first year." The article notes that "the 17-acre park, one of the Park Service's smallest properties, was designed to host a maximum of 75,000 per year." Park employees are currently "prepping for the first round of upgrades, including the installation of listening stations for self-guided museum tours and the addition of books and computer equipment for a new research library."

### **Rogue Tweets Draw More Visitors To Badlands National Park.**

The [AP](#) (2/24, Holland) reports that Badlands National Park "saw its third straight year of increased attendance in 2017, and at least part of the bump in visitation can be attributed to unintended publicity from a rogue tweet storm." According to a National Park Service, "the 1,054,324 visitors made 2017 the busiest year at the park since 2000." The figure "marks a 5.83 percent jump – 58,061 more visitors – than in 2016, partially thanks to a former NPS employee with password access to the park's Twitter account."

### **Homestead Draws Visitors To Gage County.**

The [Beatrice \(NE\) Daily Sun](#) (2/24, Koperski) reports that Homestead National Monument welcomed "nearly 124,000 people...in 2017, marking the second year ever that attendance has topped six figures." The article notes that "attendance on Monday, Aug. 21, the day of the solar eclipse, was 20,991."

### **At Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Business Was Booming In 2017: Best In 14 Years.**

The [Hampton Roads \(VA\) Virginian-Pilot](#) (2/23, Hampton) reports that "an epic spring run of bluefish and a new island teeming with shells last year helped attract the most people to Cape

Hatteras National Seashore in 14 years." The article notes that "the number of visitors reached 2.4 million, the most since 2003."

### **Yellowstone Park Plans More Security For Corralled Bison.**

The [AP](#) (2/24) reports that Yellowstone National Park "plans to increase security after fences were damaged at a bison capturing facility outside the park, in one case undoing efforts to certify the bison hadn't been exposed to a wildlife disease and could be transferred to an Indian reservation." Park Superintendent Dan Wenk last Friday "declined to tell the Bozeman Daily Chronicle what extra security measures were planned."

*Bozeman Law Firm Sues To Block Yellowstone Bison Hazing.* [Yellowstone Insider](#) (2/25, Reichard) reports that "a Bozeman, Montana-based law firm has sued to prevent the capture/hazing of bison north of Yellowstone National Park." In their suit, the firm claims "bison must be allowed to move north into the Paradise Valley." The Cottonwood Environmental Law Center "filed the suit partially in response to the influx of more tribal bison hunters to the region, which, along with hazing, could constitute a public safety hazard."

### **Fee Increases Proposed At Oregon's Crater Lake.**

The [AP](#) (2/24) reports that Crater Lake National Park "plans to increase the single-vehicle entrance fee on May 1 from \$15 to \$25 for a seven-day pass." The park's annual pass would be raised from \$30 to \$50. Also, "the current rates of \$10 per individual and \$10 per motorcycle would increase to \$12 for an individual and \$20 for a motorcycle." Park superintendent Craig Ackerman "says money from entrance fees goes toward a variety of projects and deferred maintenance."

### **'Father Of Black History' Carter G. Woodson's Home Is Open To The Public.**

The [Black Enterprise](#) (2/25, Hill) reports that "in honor of Black History Month, the National Park Service (NPS) will grant the public access to the home of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, an African American writer and historian known as the 'Father of Black History.'" The Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site is "currently open to the public Thursdays through Sundays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m."

### **6th Circ. Tosses Challenge To National Park Service Trail.**

[Law360](#) (2/23, Phillis) reports that the Sixth Circuit last Friday "said a property owners association's suit challenging the environmental review of a scenic trail project in Michigan was properly dismissed by a lower court, deciding that the issues raised in the suit should have been brought up first during a public comment period." Circuit Judge John M. Rogers, "writing for a unanimous panel, said that after the National Park Service revamped its plan for a section of the trail in 2009, no one submitted objections."

### **Sausalito Seeks Deal With Park Service On Fort Baker Ferry Plan.**

The [Marin \(CA\) Independent Journal](#) (2/24, Prado) reports that "Sausalito officials hope to negotiate an understanding with the National Park Service over a plan to send tourists via ferries to Fort Baker." According to the article, "they are concerned about more people coming to the seaside city that is already bursting at the seams on summer days with tourists on foot, buses and bicycles."

Additional coverage was provided by the [San Francisco Examiner](#) (2/23, Rodriguez).

### **Blue Ridge Parkway In Asheville Plans First Open House.**

The [Asheville \(NC\) Citizen-Times](#) (2/25, Chávez) reports that the Blue Ridge Parkway will hold its "first-ever 'Spring Preview,' an open house of sorts in which parkway staff and partners will meet and greet the public to give a 'behind the scenes' look into parkway operations and upcoming projects."

### **California Hiker Found After Missing In Yosemite For 6 Days.**

The [AP](#) (2/25) reports that "a California man was found after going missing for six days while hiking in the back country of Yosemite National Park." The National Park Service "confirmed Friday that Alan Chow of Oakland was found hydrated and in good health." Chow was "last seen Feb. 17 at the Hetch Hetchy entrance of the park, but wasn't officially noticed as missing until Tuesday." According to the article, "a National Park Service ranger in a helicopter spotted Chow, who was backpacking alone, around noon on Friday above Wapama Falls in the Hetch Hetchy

area after what was described as an extensive search effort.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Fox News](#) (2/25, Chamberlain).

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## Insular And International Affairs

### Officials Plan For Recovery, Protection Of Cultural Resources.

The [St. Thomas Source](#) (2/26, Ellis) reports that the Federal Emergency Management Agency is “surveying cultural sites in the U.S. Virgin Islands to help develop long-term recovery plans.” Officials “gathered at Whim Museum Saturday to learn about disaster aid from the federal government and the Smithsonian Institution.” The Virgin Islands Cultural Recovery Summit was “attended by about 30 guardians of culture along with representatives from FEMA, the U.S. Department of the Interior and the worlds largest museum, education and research center based in Washington D.C.”

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## Office Of Surface Mining

### Illinois Officials Announce Plan To Stabilize Mine.

The [AP](#) (2/23) reports that officials announced “a plan to stabilize a mine that collapsed under a school in southwestern Illinois.” According to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, “the ground beneath the Wolf Branch Middle School in Swansea dropped almost 25 inches when the abandoned Summit Mine collapsed in September.” The department announced last week “that it will pump a concrete mixture into the mine to halt gradual sinking.” The project will “cost nearly \$1.9 million” and “will be paid for with federal money from the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Telegraph \(IL\)](#) (2/23).

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## US Geological Survey

### Swarm Of 200 Earthquakes Strikes Yellowstone Super Volcano.

[Fox News](#) (2/23, Ghose) reports that “a swarm of more than 200 earthquakes struck Yellowstone National Park over the past two weeks, but that probably doesn’t mean the “big one” is coming anytime soon, according to geologists from the park.” According to the U.S. Geological Survey, “the 200 temblors began on Feb. 8 and ramped up on Feb. 15 in an area about 8 miles (13 kilometers) northeast of West Yellowstone, Montana.” While the swarm is larger “than the everyday seismicity in the park, it’s not a sign of a major quake, said Michael Poland, scientist-in-charge of the USGS Yellowstone Volcano Observatory in Vancouver, Washington.” Poland said, “This is what Yellowstone does; this is Yellowstone being Yellowstone. It experiences swarms all the time.”

### Powerful 7.5 Magnitude Quake Strikes Central Papua New Guinea.

[Reuters](#) (2/25, Ricci, Greenfield) reports that “a powerful 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck Papua New Guinea’s Southern Highlands province in the early hours of Monday morning, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.”

### Additional Reading.

- *Ex-USGS Official Questions Cabinet Members’ Expertise.* [Greenwire](#) (2/23, Doyle).

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## Opinion Pieces

### Protecting America’s Last Great Animal Migrations.

In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (2/23, Middleton), Arthur Middleton, an assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and a fellow of the National Geographic Society, supports Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s recent order for “the agencies in his department to work with states and private landowners to minimize development and disturbance in migration corridors and winter ranges used by elk, mule deer and pronghorn antelope.” According to Middleton, “Zinke’s order is based on solid ecological science, and it reflects broad support in conservative



Western states for protecting a natural wonder important to ecosystems and rural communities." He acknowledges that the Interior Department, under Zinke's leadership, has "accelerated oil and gas leasing significantly in the past year, and some industry groups and Western stakeholders will push back on any new land protections whatsoever." For this reason, Middleton states, "the ultimate test of the new policy may come when a new gas field or wind farm is proposed in the middle of a migration corridor or a winter range."

### **Time To Move The Bureau Of Land Management West.**

In an op-ed for the [Montrose \(CO\) Press](#) (2/25, Tipton), Rep. Scott Tipton supports moving the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management to the West. He argues that "by moving the headquarters west, decisions would more likely be made by those who understand the land best, resulting in more effective land management programs and policies." Tipton also adds that "with the impact that agencies like the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have on our public lands and local economies, their move would be beneficial as well."

### **O'TOOLE: Showing Some Love For National Monuments.**

In an op-ed for the [Pueblo \(CO\) Chieftain](#) (2/25, O'Toole), Ernest O'Toole, board president of the Chimney Rock Interpretive Association, opposes Rep. Rob Bishop's National Monument Creation and Protection Act, which he claims "actually guts the century-old Antiquities Act." In O'Toole's view, "Bishop wants to narrow dramatically the kind of landscapes, landmarks and structures that may be protected with a monument designation." O'Toole urges Rep. Scott Tipton to "fight back against these assaults on monuments by voting no on Rep. Bishop's Anti-Antiquities Act."

### **A Dangerous Precedent For Public Lands Management.**

In an op-ed for the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (2/24, Shemas), Sophie Shemas, a public lands fellow with the New Mexico Wildlife Federation, criticizes Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke for instructing the Bureau of Land Management "to do away with several opportunities for public involvement in oil and gas leasing." Shemas argues that "the BLM is required to manage our public lands for multiple uses," but "this new approach effectively strips other public land users of their say in oil and gas leasing and ultimately how our public lands are managed." She warns that the Trump Administration "continues to set a dangerous precedent for management of our public lands, selectively ignoring their multiple-use mandate and relentlessly undermining the 'public' in public lands."

### **Chaco: A Cultural Legacy At Risk.**

In an op-ed for the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/25, Atencio), Ernie Atencio, New Mexico Program Manager For National Parks Conservation Association, warns that that energy development threatens the "unique and sacred lands" Chaco Culture National Historical Park after the Trump Administration's recent move "to severely limit local communities' say in whether oil and gas development should occur near national parks and other landscapes, including the elimination of collaborative planning designed to protect public lands and sacred places while allowing energy production to continue in a balanced and sustainable way." Atencio argues that "we need to look closely at the effects of development and move slowly and carefully to minimize the impacts to these ancestral lands and nearby communities." He asserts that "we cannot allow our cultural legacy to become islands in a sea of development, with the surrounding landscape and communities little more than sacrifice zones to the administration's 'energy dominance' policy."

### **Restore Funding For Quake Early Warning System.**

In an editorial, the [San Jose \(CA\) Mercury News](#) (2/24) criticizes President Trump for rejecting "a \$10 million request to help complete the nation's earthquake early-warning system." The paper says that the system could save "lives in a disaster we know is inevitable." Seismologists say there is a 72 percent probability of an earthquake of magnitude 6.7 or greater in the Bay Area in the next 25 years. It urges California's congressional delegation "to give the Trump administration a good shaking and restore the funding to complete the earthquake early-warning system."

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Our View: Much Work Remains On Interior Department's Needed Transformation.* [Havasut \(AZ\) News-Herald](#) (2/25).

- *All Pain, No Gain: BLM Methane Rule Rollback Hurts Westerners, Helps No One* « [Breaking Energy](#) (2/23, Grossman).
- *March 9 Last Day To Comment On Offshore Oil Plan.* [Santa Cruz \(CA\) Sentinel](#) (2/24, Haifley).
- *SLO County Supervisors Should Oppose Offshore Oil Drilling.* [San Luis Obispo \(CA\) Tribune](#) (2/24).
- *Our Next Energy And Security Crisis?* [Townhall](#) (2/25, Driessen).
- *The United States Is Dependent On Other Nations For Critical And Strategic Minerals.* [Canada Free Press](#) (2/25).
- *Colligan: Future Of Wyoming Wildlife Depends On New And Innovative Funding Models.* [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (2/24, Colligan).
- *OUR VIEW: Building Trust With Fishermen Is Key For Wind Energy Companies.* [New Bedford \(MA\) Standard-Times](#) (2/24).

## Top National News

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### Trump: School Shooting Top Priority In Today's Meeting With Governors.


Brief remarks by the President during a White House reception for the nation's governors sparked a handful of print and online reports late last night. The [AP](#) (2/25, Superville) reports Trump said "the deadly mass shooting at a Florida high school is the top issue he wants to discuss with the nation's governors," who "are in Washington for their annual winter meeting." Hosting "the governors for an annual black-tie ball," Trump called them "very, very special people," and said of today's meetings, "We'll be talking about Parkland and the horrible event that took place last week. ... That will be one of the subjects. We'll make it first on our list."

[Fox News](#) (2/25, Chamberlain) said "Trump's session with the governors will be the latest in which he solicits ideas for stopping gun violence at schools as the White House works to finalize an expected legislative proposal." [CBS News](#) (2/25) reported on its website that Trump has "signaled several avenues on gun reforms that he would consider, including supporting bipartisan legislation on more stringent background checks and raising the age limit of those who can purchase high-capacity weapons." He has also "called on the Justice Department to explore regulations that would ban 'bump stock' devices."

[The Hill](#) (2/25, Manchester) says the President "singled out Florida Gov. Rick Scott...for his work after the shooting, which occurred at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School." Said Trump, "I want to thank Governor Rick Scott of Florida. Rick, please stand up. You're doing a great job. Really great job." The President "used the rest of his address to the nation's governors on Sunday to tout the economy and the Republican-backed tax reform bill." According to the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/25, Lim), he "specifically lauded gross domestic product economic indicators since former President Barack Obama's last financial quarter in office before also congratulating the group on the 'massive tax cuts' passed by the Republican-controlled Congress."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/25, Boyer) notes that "of the 36 governors who attended the White House dinner, seven were Democrats; nine Democratic governors didn't show up. Puerto Rican Gov. Ricardo Rosselló also attended."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/25, Scherer, Balz) reports, meanwhile, "a growing bipartisan number of state governors have joined calls for a reconsideration of gun laws and school safety measures after the mass shooting in Parkland," in "a sign that resulting legislative changes could extend far beyond Florida in the coming months." The Post adds that "the impact of the shootings rippled through the winter meeting of the National Governors Association in Washington this weekend, as state leaders expressed willingness to consider new limits on gun ownership." Moreover, "most said they were opposed to...Trump's proposal to allow more teachers to be armed."

On  [CBS News' Face the Nation](#) (2/25, Brennan), Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson said the response to the school shootings should be "primarily at the state level. Wherever you're looking at school safety issues, when you're looking at mental health issues, this is function that governors can be uniquely engaged in. I want to focus on the school safety side."

To [Politico](#) (2/25, Dove, DeBenedetti), however, "in the era of...Trump, Democrats are the ones looking to return power to the states," as "on climate, guns, trade, infrastructure, immigration and more, they've gone from talking about the importance of a strong federal government to looking for any and every way to do the opposite of what the federal government is doing – and in many cases, to take action where the administration won't."



On [ABC News' This Week](#) (2/25, Stephanopoulos), Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper said, "We're at a point where we're allowing ourselves to be terrorized by ourselves. If you want to weaken the country, what better way to do it than to make children afraid to go to schools. It's going to church. It's going to concerts. All the places we create community is being hit with our inability to do this." Ohio Gov. John Kasich added, "Search your heart. This is not about political power. This is not about a campaign contribution. It's about how you want to look in the mirror. Nobody wants to take everybody's guns away. Nobody wants to repeal the Second Amendment. Oh, a few people. This is about reasonable approaches to keep our communities safe."

**Media Analyses: Congress Most Likely To Tackle Background Checks, Bump Stocks.** The [AP](#) (2/25, Mascaro, Daly) reports that "after a 10-day break, members of Congress are returning to work under hefty pressure to respond to the outcry over gun violence." However, "no plan appears ready to take off despite a long list of proposals, including many from" the President. To the AP, "the most likely legislative option is bolstering the federal background check system for gun purchases, but it's bogged down after being linked with a less popular measure to expand gun rights." The [New York Times](#) (2/25, Stolberg, Martin, Kaplan) similarly indicates that "lawmakers have no clear consensus on even incremental changes to gun restrictions, let alone more sweeping legislation," and "if the past is prologue, Congress will do nothing."

More optimistic is the tone in the [Washington Times](#) (2/25, Dinan, Wolfgang), which casts Congress as "settling on the outlines of consensus for action on stricter gun controls, with moves to strengthen the background check system and to restrict sales of bump stocks the most likely areas of bipartisan action." The Times cautions that "moves to raise the age limit on sales of rifles will test the limits of the deal, though, and even Democratic leaders sounded doubtful about their ability to ban sales of military-style semi-automatic rifles." Moreover, "President Trump's suggestion to train and arm school faculty volunteers willing and adept enough to carry firearms is also meeting with stiff resistance," and Trump "now says he would leave the decision up to states."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/25, Peterson) reports Congress is most likely to take up a bill from Sens. John Cornyn and Chris Murphy that aims to strengthen the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS. The bill was passed by the House, where provisions were added allowing gun owners with carry conceal permits from one state to carry them in the other 49 states. On [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (2/25, Tapper), Murphy said, "I was encouraged that President Trump said he's in favor of comprehensive background check," adding he was "hopeful that the President may be willing to take on the NRA. If he does, there may be a bunch of Republicans that follow."

On [NBC's Meet the Press](#) (2/25, Todd), Toomey said he wasn't sure there were 60 votes in the Senate for a bill he sponsored with West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin to strengthen background checks. Toomey added, "Look, the problem is we have a lot of gun sales in America today for which there's no background check whatsoever, and this is one of the things Sen. Manchin and I are trying to address. Let's at least require background check for all commercial sales." He added, "I do think there are some members who were not supportive in the past who are reconsidering."

On [NBC News' Meet the Press](#) (2/25, Todd), Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY) said, "I wish that background checks stopped criminals or stopped school shootings but they don't. ... You're trying to put lipstick on a pig. You can put all the information you want in it, but the shooter in Connecticut who stole his mother's firearms and shot her before he committed the crime isn't going to be stopped by a background check." Massie added, "We should pass my law to repeal the Gun Free School Zone Act, call it the Safe Students Act. But look, those" background checks "are false senses of security."

**Some In Congress Pushing To Restore Funding For CDC Research On Gun Violence.** The [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/25, story 4, 2:10, Quijano) reported, "Over the past two decades, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been restricted from researching the impact of guns on public health." CBS' Jon LaPook added, "Back in 1993, a CDC study found homicide was three times more likely in homes with guns. That prompted Congress to pass legislation in 1996, prohibiting the CDC from doing any research to advocate or promote gun control. The ban had a chilling effect on all gun-related research by the agency." LaPook said he interviewed ex-Rep. John Dickey – since deceased – "who helped write the law. He told me he had come to regret its affect." Now, added LaPook, some in Congress are calling "for restoring CDC funding of research into gun violence. It remains to be seen whether that will snowball into actual repeal of the Dickey Amendment."

**Poll: Overwhelming Support For Gun Control, Little Faith Congress Will Enact It.** [USA Today](#)

(2/25, Page, Icsman) reports "Americans overwhelmingly support tougher gun laws, a new USA TODAY/Suffolk University Poll finds, but they also overwhelmingly agree on this: Congress isn't likely to act anytime soon." For example, "by almost 2-1, 61%-33%, they say tightening gun-control laws and background checks would prevent more mass shootings," while 63% "say semi-automatic weapons like the AR-15...should be banned." Moreover, "by more than 6-1, 76%-12%, they say people who have been treated for mental illness should be banned from owning a firearm." At the same time, "fewer than one in five, 19%, say the odds" that Congress will act "are excellent or good," while "more than three in four; 76%, rate them as fair or poor."

***Large Crowds At Tampa Gun Show Featuring "Many Tables" With Racks If AR-15s.*** The [New York Times](#) (2/25, Hsu) reports "the lines stretched out the door this weekend at a gun show in Tampa, Fla., as thousands of potential buyers and the merely curious waited for their turn to browse booths stocked with the latest firearms, ammunition, customizable holsters and patriotic paraphernalia." The Times adds that "buyers and sellers were talking about the" recent school shooting, "as well as about the divisive debate that it had recently reignited." At any rate, "there, on many tables, were racks of AR-15s – variations of the hugely popular semiautomatic rifle used by the 19-year-old Parkland gunman," and "several sellers said they were on track to double their normal sales for a weekend."

### **NRA Opposes Raising Age To Buy Semiautomatic Rifles, But Sees No Rift With Trump.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/25, Wagner) reports that the NRA's Dana Loesch yesterday "pushed back against proposals to raise the age to purchase a semiautomatic weapon to 21, an idea that President Trump has seemed to embrace in recent days." Loesch "said the group's opposition to the change is 'incredibly clear' and stressed that Trump has not formally backed the idea." Loesch added, "I know that people are trying to find daylight between President Trump and 5 million law-abiding gun owners, and law-abiding gun owners all across the United States." [The Hill](#) (2/25, Sanchez) notes Loesch said of Trump, "These are just things that he's discussing right now."

Despite Loesch's words, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/25, story 2, 2:20, Ramos) reported, "Trump and the National Rifle Association, the closest of allies, [are] at odds about what to do in the wake of the deadly Florida high school massacre." Trump was shown saying last week, "It doesn't seem to make sense that you have to wait until you're 21 years-old to get a pistol. But to get a gun like this maniac used in the school, you get that at 18. I mean, that doesn't make sense, and frankly I explained that to the NRA." However, added ABC, "the NRA is pushing back against any calls to raise the age limit to buy an AR-15 semiautomatic rifle like the one used in Florida and many other deadly mass shootings."

On [ABC News' This Week](#) (2/25, Stephanopoulos), Loesch said of Trump, "I think that it's great that he, as the President, had all of these individuals, all of these constituents, come into the White House. He had the listening sessions. He's really looking for solutions. He really wanted to hear what they had to say. So far, nothing has been proposed yet." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/25, King) reports the comments "illustrated the ways in which both allies and opponents of gun-law reform will have to maneuver gingerly when dealing with a president known for fluidity in his policy positions, especially in matters on which public opinion is at odds with the traditional views of his Republican party."

[The Hill](#) (2/25, Shelbourne), meanwhile, reports that GOP Sen. Pat Toomey said on [NBC's Meet the Press](#) that "he is 'skeptical' of proposals to increase the minimum age requirement to purchase certain guns like the AR-15," because "the vast majority of 18-, 19-, 20-, 21-year-olds are law-abiding citizens who aren't a threat to anyone."

***NRA Accuses Companies Severing Ties Of "Cowardice."*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/25, Richardson) reports the NRA "has swung back at companies severing their partnerships with the gun-rights advocacy group under threat of boycott, accusing them of 'political and civil cowardice.'" On Saturday, "the NRA said its five million members would not be deterred after a string of businesses, including Symantec, MetLife, Hertz, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, TrueCar, and airlines Delta and United, announced they will no longer offer discounts for NRA members as the boycott campaign gained steam after the Parkland school shooting."

***AP Profile: "Poised, Photogenic" Loesch Is NRA's "New Public Face."*** The [AP](#) (2/25, Webber) reports that spokeswoman Dana Loesch "is the new public face of the National Rifle Association, an organization long associated with older white men." Loesch is "poised, photogenic and a skilled public speaker, yet she's not softening the message of the NRA as it becomes an increasingly active voice in the nation's culture wars, with positions on everything from immigration to the media."

## **As Sheriff Touts His “Amazing Leadership,” Probe Of Response To Shooting Underway.**

The [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (2/25, Fleshler) reports Florida Gov. Rick Scott yesterday “asked the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to investigate the response to the Parkland school massacre, as questions mounted over the Broward Sheriff’s Office’s handling of the shooting.” Scott’s “announcement came just hours after Broward Sheriff Scott Israel appeared on CNN and refused any blame for his agency’s missteps and touted his own ‘amazing leadership.’”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/25, Morton) notes that “it came out last week that Scott Peterson, the armed school security officer provided by the Broward County Sheriff’s Department, did not try to engage the gunman as he killed 17 students and staff.” Moreover, “according to police from another department, three Broward sheriff’s deputies also waited behind the cars outside while the shooting spree was going on.” The [Miami Herald](#) (2/25, Smiley) says that “those revelations, along with” information that the Sheriff’s Office “had received tips that Cruz was a possible ‘school shooter in the making,’ led dozens of state lawmakers to call for his suspension.”

The [Palm Beach \(FL\) Post](#) (2/25, Tully, Streeter) reports that Florida House Speaker Richard Corcoran “called for Israel’s suspension from office in a letter to...Scott.” The letter was “dated Sunday and released on Corcoran’s Twitter account.” It “asked that Israel be suspended for ‘incompetence and neglect of duty’ in connection” to shooting, and “was signed by Corcoran and 73 other Republican state representatives.” The [Miami Herald](#) (2/25, Smiley) indicates that “Israel, a Democrat, was defiant and dismissed calls for him to step down or be removed,” telling CNN, “Of course I won’t resign.” [Politico](#) (2/25, Caputo) notes “one of the only House Republicans who didn’t sign the letter, state Rep. George Moraitis, is from Broward County, a liberal bastion in the state.”

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/25, Smiley) reports Israel “accused a South Florida lawmaker calling for his ouster,” Republican Rep. Bill Hagel, “of ‘disingenuous political grandstanding.’” Hager accused the sheriff of “neglect of duty and incompetence,” and citing “reports...that the Broward Sheriff’s Office had received 23 calls about Cruz over 10 years, some of which detailed possible plans to shoot up the school.” The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/25, Feldscher) credits CNN’s Jake Tapper with also taking “Israel to task Sunday morning after his department received more than 20 warnings about” Cruz.

The [Washington Times](#) (2/25, Wolfgang) says “Peterson’s decision to wait outside the high school while the gunman carried out a massacre has become a white-hot debate in its own right, even as a much-broader fight over gun control and school safety plays out in Washington and across the country.” Even among the students, there is a split on the deputy’s behavior, with some expressing outrage and others sounding sympathetic notes on his decision not to enter the school during the shooting. The [Washington Post](#) (2/25, Harwell, Berman) notes “Israel said Sunday that he should not be faulted for Peterson’s actions,” saying, “You don’t measure a person’s leadership by a deputy not going in.”

The [AP](#) (2/25) reports Israel also “labeled as ‘absolutely untrue’ reports that the deputies waited outside even though children were inside the building needing urgent medical treatment.” [Reuters](#) (2/25) notes, however, that Israel “did not rule out that the investigation could find other deputies who were guilty of dereliction of duty.” In fact, said the [Daily Caller](#) (2/25, Athey), Israel “dodged when asked if the deputies may have received a ‘stand down’ order that prevented them from entering the school.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/25, De Avila) quotes from a statement from the Sheriff’s office that stated, “There is no confirmation, at this time, other deputies did not enter the school when they should have. ... Again, it’s a claim being investigated to determine if further action is warranted.”

[Townhall](#) (2/25, Meads), meanwhile, said in its report, “Let’s call a spade, a spade, here.” Israel “looked like an absolute jerk...on CNN’s State of the Union.”

**NRA’s Loesch: “Headline” Is Law Enforcement’s Failure To Heed Warnings About Cruz.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/25, Wolfgang) reports that NRA spokeswoman Dana Loesch said yesterday that “the ‘headline’ in the aftermath of the...shooting is the failure of the FBI and local law enforcement to do something about...Cruz before he carried out his massacre.” Said Loesch, “Family and neighbors called the Broward County Sheriff’s office to report this individual and they did not follow up. That is the headline.”

**Students, Parents Return To Stoneman Douglas High School.** The [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (2/25, Ballou, Chokey) reports that “thousands...returned to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School” yesterday, “their first time back since the Valentine’s Day shooting that claimed 17 lives.” The Sun Sentinel notes that “therapy dogs and volunteers passed out water and stood ready to help the families.” The [Miami Herald](#) (2/25, Harris) reports “hundreds of families...visited the Parkland campus for a ‘reunification,’” with “teachers, staff and counselors...on hand as students

picked up the textbooks and backpacks they left behind as they fled during and after the Valentine's Day shooting." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/25, story 3, 2:40, Llamas), the [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/25, story 3, 2:00, Villafranca) and [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/25, story 2, 2:05, Rodriguez) described the scene at the school and interviewed parents and students.

The [New York Times](#) (2/25, Healy, Mazzei) reports, "That debate largely stayed outside on Sunday. Inside Stoneman Douglas High, students said, they mostly just hugged." The Times adds that "the gathering on Sunday was the beginning of what Broward County school officials have called a 'phased reopening' of the school."

*Research Unveils "Conspiracy Ecosystem" Behind Wild Internet Claims.* The [Washington Post](#) (2/25, Timberg, Harwell) reports that "the wild conspiracies that flooded YouTube after the school shooting...got social media researcher Jonathan Albright wondering: How did people find all these crazy videos? And once they found one, what else were they likely to stumble upon?" The Post notes that Albright found that "YouTube viewers who started searching for information on 'crisis actors'...could soon find themselves tumbling down a rabbit hole of conspiracies about the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, the JFK assassination and Pizzagate." Albright, research director at Columbia University's Tow Center for Digital Journalism, tells the Post, "It's a conspiracy ecosystem. ... It's growing, not only in size but in depth." YouTube "did not immediately respond to a request for comment."

### **Trump, In CPAC Speech, Reiterates His Support For Arming Teachers.**

President Trump in his address at the Conservative Political Action Committee conference on Friday condemned the Parkland, Florida sheriff's deputy who failed to stop last week's shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and he again insisted that arming teachers would help prevent violence. Media coverage, which includes over twenty minutes combined on the network newscasts, was also extensive in print and online, although most reporting considered Trump's remarks in context of the broader debate over gun control regulations.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Wagner) reports the President "repeatedly castigated" Scot Peterson, the "armed school resource officer who stayed outside during [the] deadly school shooting in South Florida last week" and "told a national gathering of conservatives that the carnage...would have been reduced if teachers could have confronted the gunman with a weapon." The [New York Times](#) (2/23, Davis) reports Trump said, "When it came time to get in there and do something, he didn't have the courage, or something happened, but he certainly did a poor job – there's no question about that." He earlier told reporters that as Peterson was trained, he either "didn't act properly under pressure, or [was] a coward."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Wagner, Berman) says Trump at CPAC proceeded to "reiterate his view that a primary strategy to counter such shootings is to arm teachers with concealed weapons." The [AP](#) (2/23, Thomas, Colvin) reports Trump "told conservatives Friday that even Second Amendment supporters can get behind steps to fight gun violence in schools, offering a red-meat call for arming teachers and suggesting they would be more likely to protect students than a security guard who 'doesn't love the children.'"

The [Washington Times](#) (2/23, Boyer, Sherfinski) reports Trump said, "When we declare our schools to be gun-free zones, it just puts our students in far more danger." The President added, "Well-trained gun-adept teachers and coaches and people that work in those buildings who were in the Marines for 20 years...should be able to carry concealed firearms. It's time to make our schools a much harder target for attackers." [Reuters](#) (2/23, Alexander) reports Trump additionally said his Administration is "going to look at that whole military base gun-free zone." He asserted, "If we can't have our military holding guns, it's pretty bad."

[Breitbart](#) (2/23, Spiering) reports the President also "defended the National Rifle Association (NRA), as the left and the mainstream media blamed the gun rights organization for mass shootings." Trump said, "These are good people, in many cases great people, they are patriots, they love our country." He added, "The NRA wants to do the right thing, I've been speaking to them."

According to [Bloomberg News](#) (2/23, Epstein), the President's proposal to arm teachers "was met with cheers" at CPAC. However, Bloomberg asserts that his remarks stand "in stark contrast to his calls earlier this week for tougher gun laws than he's backed since before he began running for president in 2015, including a proposal to strengthen the federal background check system and raising the minimum age for buying a semi-automatic weapon to 21, something the powerful NRA has made clear it opposes." [CBS Evening News](#) (2/23, story 6, 1:50, Glor) chief White House correspondent Major Garrett similarly emphasized that "three separate times" on Friday, the President "addressed his school safety agenda, and each time



neglected to mention an idea he endorsed only yesterday – raising the minimum purchase age for semiautomatic firearms to 21. Congressional sources say there is no interest in pushing an age minimum.”

Meanwhile, the [Washington Times](#) (2/23, Miller) states that Trump, during a press conference with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Friday, “said...that he is ready to push legislation to expand background checks for firearm purchases with a focus on preventing the mentally ill from getting guns.” [The Hill](#) (2/23, Easley) reports the President also said that he spoke with Senate Majority Leader McConnell and House Speaker Ryan “about his gun control proposals, an indication that he’s ramping up pressure on Congress to pass legislation to address mass shootings.”

However, a [Chicago Tribune](#) (2/23) editorial says the proposal to arm teachers is “so absurd and irresponsible, it needs to be laughed off – quickly” so that lawmakers “can get back to reality-based discussions about how to better protect kids, and everyone else, by deterring mass shooters.” The Tribune concludes that “teachers and administrators do important work, as do police and other first responders,” and thus teachers should be allowed to focus on educating children “and leave the protection of civilians to other professionals.”

***Student Calls Upon First Lady To Criticize Donald Trump Jr. For Cyberbullying, Promoting Conspiracy Theories.*** [The Hill](#) (2/23, Anapol) “Ballot Box” blog reports Lauren Hogg, a survivor of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, on Friday “tore into first lady Melania Trump on Twitter, saying the first lady should ‘have a convo’ with Donald Trump Jr. about cyber bullying.” The Hill mentions that her brother David “has been one of the most outspoken student voices on gun control” and says her family “has been the subject of conspiracy theories suggesting that David Hogg was ‘coached’ by his father, a former FBI agent, to call for gun control, and that he is a paid ‘crisis actor.’” The Hill highlights that “Donald Trump Jr. ‘liked’ several tweets that linked to some of the conspiracy theories, prompting major backlash.”

[CNN](#) (2/23, Murphy) reports “The Alex Jones Channel, Infowar’s biggest YouTube account, received one strike for” posting a video about David Hogg, according to a source familiar with the account. CNN adds YouTube on Wednesday “removed the video from InfoWars’ page for violating its policies on harassment and bullying.” CNN adds “if the account receives two more strikes in three months, it will be terminated.”

Meanwhile, [The Hill](#) (2/23, Delk) “Briefing Room” blog reports Cameron Kasky, another survivor of the shooting who “has become an outspoken leader of the nationwide student-led movement for gun restrictions,” announced Friday that “he has left Facebook after receiving death threats for his gun control advocacy” from “NRA cultists” and “teenagers” at Breitbart.

***Polls Suggest Gun Policies To Play Major Role In Midterm Elections.*** [The Hill](#) (2/23, Bowden) reports a [Marist](#) poll of 1,026 “adults” (2/20-2/21) released Friday found 85 percent “say a candidate’s views on gun control will affect their vote, including 59 percent who said such positions would be a ‘major factor’ on their vote.” The poll also showed 71 percent “of Americans, including 58 percent of gun owners, say restrictions on gun ownership should be tightened, up from 64 percent in the same poll last October. Just 23 percent of Americans say gun laws should remain the same while 5 percent say the laws should be less strict.” However, the poll revealed 54 percent of Americans “would support a congressional candidate who favors banning [assault] weapons, while the poll finds that 57 percent of gun owners would vote against such a candidate. Support for an assault weapons ban among gun owners sits at 35 percent.”

Meanwhile, [Politico](#) (2/23, Lima) reports a [CBS News](#) poll of 1,012 “adults” (2/20-2/22) released Friday found 65 percent “back more stringent laws on firearm sales, marking an 8-point increase in support for stronger gun laws from December” and 87 percent “say they favor increased spending on mental health screening and 75 percent back strengthening background checks on gun buyers, two proposals that White House officials and legislators have discussed in the wake of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.” However, Politico adds 44 percent of respondents “say they’d support arming more teachers, while 50 percent oppose the move. The findings showed backing for the measure was largely split along partisan lines, with 68 percent of Republicans favoring it and 74 percent of Democrats opposing it.”

In addition, [The Hill](#) (2/23, Carter) reports the CBS poll “finds just 33 percent of Americans approve of Trump’s handling of the shooting” while 50 percent “disapprove of the way Trump has handled the shooting, and 17 percent said they didn’t know or had no answer.” The Hill says the poll found 69 percent of Republicans “approve of the way Trump has handled the shooting, while” 32 percent of independents and 7 percent of Democrats approve of his performance. The Hill adds 84 percent of Democrats “disapprove of Trump’s response to the attack, and 45 percent of independents disapprove. Just 15 percent of Republicans disapprove of the way Trump has handled the shooting, according to the poll.”

***NRA Honors FCC Chairman With Rifle For Braving Threats Over Repeal Of Net Neutrality.***

[Reuters](#) (2/24, Shepardson) reports the NRA honored Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai at CPAC on Friday "with a rifle after braving death threats and other opposition as he worked to undo the Obama administration's 2015 net neutrality rules."

[Politico](#) (2/23, McGill) reports an NRA official told Pai that the Charlton Heston Courage Under Fire award "is a 'Kentucky handmade long gun' that will be housed at the NRA's museum with a plaque until he can receive it." Politico adds the official "said the award is not given every year, but only when someone has 'stood up under pressure with grace and dignity and principled discipline.'" In a statement, an FCC spokesman said, "The CPAC award was a surprise and the chairman was honored." [The Hill](#) (2/23, Neidig) notes that Vice President Pence and former Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke are also among the previous recipients of the award.

***Campaign Legal Center Asks Interior IG To Investigate Zinke Meeting In Gun Company.*** The [AP](#) (2/23) reports the Campaign Legal Center on Friday called on the Interior Department's Inspector General to investigate if Interior Secretary Zinke last year had violated "a conflict of interest law by meeting with executives of" PROOF Research, "a Montana firearms company in which he holds stock." According to the AP, a spokeswoman for the Secretary "rejected the group's suggestion that he did something wrong" and said Zinke met with the company's representatives last April as a "social call" from fellow Montanans.

***House Republicans Ask Ryan To Hold A Vote On Background Check Bill As Cornyn Says Senate Plans To Address Bump Stocks.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Debonis) reports Rep. Leonard Lance and 18 other House Republicans sent a letter to House Speaker Ryan on Friday calling for him "to schedule a vote next week on legislation that would boost the national background check system for gun purchases." The Post states that "the bill, which is narrow in focus, would reinforce the requirement that federal agencies report all criminal infractions to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and create financial incentives for states to do so, as well." However, [Politico](#) (2/23, Castillo) acknowledges "conservatives are unwilling to back it unless it includes so-called concealed-carry legislation backed by the National Rifle Association."

In a [New York Times](#) (2/23, Mast) op-ed, Rep. Brian Mast, an Army veteran, asserts "I know that my community, our schools and public gathering places are not made safer by any person having access to the best killing tool the Army could put in my hands." Therefore, Mast states: "I cannot support the primary weapon I used to defend our people being used to kill children I swore to defend." Mast also shares his recommendations for reform. [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/23, story 2, 2:00, Holt) chief White House correspondent Hallie Jackson reported the White House "has said the President would not support" the type of ban advocated by Mast "right now, but he does back a different proposal, one for stronger background checks."

Meanwhile, Sen. John Cornyn in an interview with the [Washington Times](#) (2/23, Dinan) on Friday predicted "the Senate will likely expand its looming gun debate beyond background check improvements to also include giving the administration authority to ban bump stocks," although he "was more skeptical of efforts to raise the legal age for buying rifles from 18 to 21, saying that seemed an 'arbitrary' line." Cornyn suggested that restricting bump stocks "may be as simple as just providing explicit authority to the bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to regulate bump stocks."

In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/23) asserts that "to seriously confront gun violence – save lives and prevent injuries – there have to be fewer guns." The Post calls for starting with a ban on "the semiautomatic rifles that – along with large-capacity ammunition magazines – have become the weapon of choice of mass shooters wanting to kill as many people as possible in the shortest period of time." The Post concludes that rather than be "scared by the hysteria that the National Rifle Association is trying to drum up about the Second Amendment being shredded and the government coming after you," Americans should "be scared that Congress again will do nothing, and that another inalienable right – that to life and happiness – will be further eroded."

***Florida Governor Endorses Raising Age Limit On Gun Purchases, Other Measures.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/23, A1, Scherer) in a front-page article reports Florida Gov. Rick Scott on Friday "joined a growing list of Republican lawmakers...to endorse raising the minimum age for purchasing rifles to 21 years old, marking his first major break from the policy priorities of the National Rifle Association." The Post says the leadership of the state House and Senate "quickly stood with Scott in backing a broad package of legislative initiatives, including funding for increased school security and setting up a new process to take guns out of the hands of those deemed to pose a danger."

However, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/23, Levitz) reports Scott's plan does not reference the President's proposal to arm teachers, as does the [AP](#) (2/23, Farrington, Fineout, Anderson), which

states that Broward County Public Schools Superintendent Robert Runcie said, "I am totally against arming teachers. ... They have a challenging job as it is."

Nonetheless, a front-page [New York Times](#) (2/23, A1, Mazzei, Bidgood) article hails the proposals as "the most significant move toward gun control in Florida in decades," but says that although the new restrictions "defy the National Rifle Association," the measures "fall short of demands from survivors of last week's school shooting." [Reuters](#) (2/23, Fagenson) similarly reports "gun control advocates welcomed Scott's steps to tighten laws, but some wanted more." Julie Kessel, president of the League of Women Voters of Florida, said the reforms amounted to "very small, incremental changes." Kessel added, "None of them gets to the heart of what would really change gun violence, which is to ban assault weapons and close these loopholes immediately in background checks."

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/23, Klas) says Marion Hammer, the head of the NRA's Florida chapter, "blasted" Scott's proposals as "political eyewash" since the shooting "had nothing to do with law-abiding gun owners." She added that the measures will punish "law-abiding gun owners for the acts of a criminal and the failure of the FBI, DCF and the SRO who wouldn't do his job."

Meanwhile, [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/23, story 3, 2:25, Holt) Kerry Sanders highlighted that "when the students return to Marjory Stoneman Douglas...next week, the campus grounds will be patrolled by more than one deputy and they'll each be carrying an AR-15. That's the same type of weapon the accused gunman used to kill 17 people."

***New York City Gun Law Survives Legal Challenge As More States Signal Openness To "Red Flag" Laws.*** [Reuters](#) (2/23, Stempel) reports a three-member panel of the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit on Friday voted unanimously to uphold "strict New York City limits on how licensed handgun owners may use their weapons outside the home" and "said the restrictions on people who have licenses to have guns at home, known as 'premises' licenses, did not violate the Second Amendment." According to Reuters, "backed by the National Rifle Association, three gun owners and the New York State Rifle & Pistol Association had sought permission for holders of premises licenses to take guns to shooting ranges outside New York City, or other homes in New York state."

Meanwhile, the [New York Times](#) (2/23, Johnson) reports only five states have enacted "'red flag laws' or extreme risk protection orders allowing the police to temporarily take away guns from people deemed by a judge to be dangerous," but similar legislation is "being weighed in more than a dozen additional state capitals from Pennsylvania to Hawaii." Although "many Republicans oppose red flag laws, and the National Rifle Association has argued that a judge's order to seize a person's weapon may violate Second Amendment rights when no crime has been committed," the Times states that "law enforcement officials who have embraced red flag laws say that they allow the authorities to step in before something catastrophic occurs." The Times adds "the removals are temporary, these officials stress, meaning that guns are returned to people no longer deemed dangerous."

[Politico](#) (2/23, Severns) reports Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder at the Politico State Solutions Conference on Friday "called for possibly restricting assault rifles or enacting 'red flag' legislation to prevent school shootings, saying he's had personal experience watching young people die in a shooting and hopes to work with lawmakers to enact new laws." [The Hill](#) (2/23, Anapol) reports that while Snyder "called for a 'thoughtful dialogue' on guns," he also "appeared to break with President Trump's stance of arming trained teachers" and he conceded, "I don't think having more guns is a good thing."

[Politico](#) (2/23, Lamkey) reports Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper similarly "addressed federal and state gun policy" at the conference. He characterized mass shootings as "a form of terrorism that's been used against us" and also "said he was concerned" by Vice President Pence's "insistence that the Trump administration would seek to improve the background-check system means that the administration won't support universal background checks for all gun purchases." Hickenlooper asked, "Why leave loopholes where there don't have to be loopholes?"

On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/23, story 7, 0:50, Glor), Margaret Brennan said, "things look a little different, feel a little different. Will they be? We're seeing some gun policy conversations at a lot of town hall meetings across the country, and that could mean you'll see faster movement at the state and local level than perhaps at the federal level."

***Former Secretary Of State Calls For Conversation About Second Amendment.*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/23, Chasmar) reports former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in an interview with radio talk show host Hugh Hewitt on Friday "said that while the Second Amendment remains 'indivisible,' she doesn't think civilians should have access to guns like the AR-15." Rice also called for "a conversation about what the right to bear arms means in the modern world." She

continued, "I don't understand why civilians need to have access to military weapons. We wouldn't say you can go out and buy a tank." As a political science professor at Stanford University, Rice additionally "said she's also uncomfortable with the idea of allowing teachers to carry guns in the classroom."

***Several Companies Cut Ties To NRA Amid As Boycott Intensifies.*** [Reuters](#) (2/23, Goldberg, Cherelus) reports "the fallout over last week's shooting rampage at a Florida high school started to take its toll on the National Rifle Association's roster of corporate partners on Friday as a half dozen companies severed marketing ties with the gun advocacy organization." According to Reuters, "the exodus of corporate names...occurred after the NRA launched a counter-offensive against a student-led campaign for tighter U.S. gun ownership laws." [Bloomberg News](#) (2/23, Mosendz) says the boycott "became the top trend on Twitter as users of the global social media platform demanded that a variety of companies sever ties with the lobbying group."

In brief reports, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/23, story 6, 0:20, Muir) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/23, story 3, 0:40, Glor) said that the companies ending their deals for NRA members, include "all the major car rental companies," insurance company MetLife, and Wyndham Hotels. [Reuters](#) (2/23, Barlyn) reports that Symantec Corp "said on Friday it has stopped a program with the National Rifle Association that offered discounts for its LifeLock identity theft product." [Reuters](#) (2/23, Barlyn) reports Chubb Ltd also "said that it will stop underwriting a National Rifle Association-branded insurance policy for gun owners," but a spokesman disclosed that the insurer "gave notice three months ago of its plan to stop participating in the NRA insurance program, known as 'NRA Carry Guard.'" [Politico](#) (2/23, Alexander) reports that "#BoycottNRA supporters also pressured Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos to stop streaming NRATV, which is NRA's free online video channel."

The [AP](#) (2/23, Troise, Olson) reports "those defections arrived a day after car rental company Enterprise Holdings, which also owns Alamo and National, said it was cutting off discounts for NRA members" while "First National Bank of Omaha, one of the nation's largest privately held banks, announced that it would not renew a co-branded Visa credit-card with the NRA." The AP adds that "other companies, including Wyndham Hotels and Best Western hotels, have let social media users know they are no longer affiliated with the NRA, though they did not make clear when the partnerships ended."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Barbash, Bever) says that while US businesses "have become increasingly politically aware and have participated in boycotts over the past few years against states over LGBT rights," the NRA "is a well-funded membership operation devoted to a single cause – guns – and unlikely to be moved by the actions of companies with which it has such loose and peripheral ties." However, the Post highlights that "like many other organizations, the NRA has benefit deals with companies designed to make membership more appealing," which include "savings on a credit card, hearing aids, car rentals, travel, car purchases and prescription drugs." The Post adds FedEx "gives NRA Business Alliance members up to a 26 percent discount on shipping expenses," but the company "has not said anything publicly about its NRA association in recent days; when reached around 4:30 ET on Friday afternoon, a company spokesperson said he had no information to provide."

Meanwhile, [AFP](#) (2/23) says the "Italian luxury fashion brand Gucci on Friday" joined "a slew of US celebrities" in announcing a \$500,000 donation to the "March For Our Lives," which will be held next month to advocate on behalf of "tougher gun controls."

In the lead [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/23, lead story, 2:15, Holt) segment, business correspondent Jo Ling Kent reported the NRA "did not respond to requests for comment," but "some gun rights supporters say they'll counter-boycott the companies who are cutting ties with the NRA."

***Facebook Removes Virtual Shooting Game Demo At CPAC, Apologizes.*** [The Hill](#) (2/23, Breland) reports Facebook on Friday "removed a virtual reality shooting game demonstration" at CPAC "after facing backlash over the timing of showcasing the game one week after the Parkland, Fla., shootings." In a statement, Hugo Berra, Facebook's vice president of virtual reality, said, "In light of the recent events in Florida and out of respect for the victims and their families, we have removed them from this demo. We regret that we failed to do so in the first place."

***WPost A1 Profiles Growing "Club No One Wants To Join" Of School Shooting Survivors.*** In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) profiles the survivors of school shootings, who "call themselves the "club no one wants to join." The Post highlights that "with the growing list of mass shootings in America, survivors have taken it upon themselves to connect." According to the Post, "they offer support that only someone who has huddled in a closet while a gunman lurked outside, or buried a murdered child, can provide. They find one another via formal and



informal networks, social media and, as their ranks grow, by unlucky coincidence, such as” Yvonne Cech, a librarian at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and Diana Perri Haneski, a librarian at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, who became friends 36 years ago and have each “survived a mass shooting.”

**FBI Releases Transcript Of 911 Calls Warning About Cruz Before Shooting.** “The warnings that law enforcement officials received about Nikolas Cruz were anything but subtle,” the [New York Times](#) (2/23, A1, Oppel, Kovaleski, Mazzei, Goldman) reports in a front-page article, according to “the transcripts of those calls.” The Times adds that “listening to the audiotapes of some of them...is a chilling exercise that makes Mr. Cruz’s arrest in one of America’s deadliest school shootings seem less than a complete surprise.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/23, Wilber, Calvert, Kamp, De Avila) also recaps the transcripts, which Manuel Bojorquez of the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/23, story 2, 2:50, Glor) reported “came from someone described as close to the shooting suspect who said he became easily enraged and it was just a matter of time before he was going to, quote, ‘explode.’” [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/23, story 5, 2:20, Muir) Victor Oquendo reported “the FBI has admitted to failing to follow up on the tip. We’re also hearing frightening 911 calls less than three months before the shooting. On the phone, a woman who initially had taken in Cruz after his mother died.”

Meanwhile, the [Miami Herald](#) (2/23, Ovalle) reports Cruz’s “troubling behavior gave law enforcement plenty of opportunities to investigate and arrest him – and even take away his guns – long before he shot up Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland last week, according to interviews with former South Florida prosecutors and legal experts.” The Herald adds that “in recent years, South Florida police detectives have arrested a slew of young men in unrelated cases who exhibited similar, troubling behavior on a variety of charges,” but “it never happened with Cruz.” According to the Herald, “the failures echo how law enforcement handled Florida’s other recent deadly mass shooters, Omar Mateen and Esteban Santiago.”

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/23) suggests law enforcement officials failed to stop the shooting due to mistakes tied to bureaucracy. The Journal warns more laws and regulations may not prevent future attacks.

**Four Broward Deputies Did Not Enter School During Shooting, Sources Say.** “When Coral Springs police officers arrived at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, on February 14 in the midst of the school shooting crisis, many officers were surprised to find not only that Broward County Sheriff’s Deputy Scot Peterson, the armed school resource officer, had not entered the building, but that three other Broward County Sheriff’s deputies were also outside the school and had not entered, Coral Springs sources tell” [CNN](#) (2/23, Tapper) reports, though “the deputies had their pistols drawn and were behind their vehicles.” The sources also told CNN that some of the officers “were stunned and upset that the four original Broward County Sheriff’s deputies who were first on the scene did not appear to join them as they entered the school.” However, CNN acknowledges “it’s unclear whether the shooter was still in the building when they arrived.”

Meanwhile, the [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Jackman) reports “some experts noted that police departments have differing policies on how many officers are needed before confronting an active shooter, and the Broward County Sheriff’s Office refused to release its policy Friday.” The Post says that although “some departments do not permit an officer to approach alone,” Sheriff Scott Israel’s comments “indicated he felt that Peterson didn’t follow department protocol.”

[The Hill](#) (2/23, Byrnes) reports the NRA “slammed” Israel on Friday, two days after he “knocked the gun lobby during a televised town hall.” At the CNN event, Israel told NRA spokeswoman Dana Loesch, “I understand you’re standing up for the NRA and I understand that’s what you’re supposed to do. But you just told this group of people that you are standing up for them. You are not standing up for them until you say, ‘I want less weapons.’” In response, the NRA [tweeted](#) “No Sheriff Israel you were the one that didn’t PROTECT these children and that is your job. You run the largest fully accredited sheriff’s office in the United States, yet your office failed this community.”

However, [The Hill](#) (2/23, Gstalter) reports in its “Briefing Room” blog that Marjory Stoneman Douglas teacher Felicia Burgin in an interview with MSNBC “said Friday that people are directing their hurt and anger in the ‘wrong direction’ by blaming” Peterson and other law enforcement officers rather than “the gunman who killed all these people” and said he was being treated as a “scapegoat.”

**Numerous Individuals In Several States Arrested, Charged For School Threats.** The [AP](#) (2/24) reports the US Attorney’s Office in New Mexico on Friday announced federal charges against a 25-year-old and 19-year-old man “for allegedly using social media to post school shooting

threats." The AP adds FBI Special Agent in Charge Terry Wade "says the agency has zero tolerance for anyone who threatens to do harm to others."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Allen) reports former NFL offensive lineman Jonathan Martin was taken into custody on Friday "because of an Instagram post" from him that "featured an image of a shotgun and mentioned" his high private school by name. The Post adds the image accompanied the message, "When you're a bully victim & a coward, your options are suicide, or revenge." The [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/23, story 11, 0:20, Muir), the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/23, story 4, 1:30, Glor), and [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/23, story 9, 1:25, Holt) provided similar coverage and noted the school was closed out of an abundance of caution.

In addition, the [Miami Herald](#) (2/23, Cohen) reports that on Friday, "staff members at Pasco High School in the Tampa Bay area discovered an AR-15 rifle and ammunition in the bed of a student's truck parked on campus." Dade City police subsequently arrested an 18-year-old senior "and charged him with possession of a weapon on school property, a third degree felony."

The [AP](#) (2/23) reports "authorities say a scared elementary school student brought a gun and knife to school in Kansas after seeing a threatening Facebook post the child thought was directed at the school." According to the AP, "school officials said Friday that the student meant no harm to anyone at Stewart Elementary School in Salina. The weapons were immediately secured and the student was removed from the property."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/23, Kucher) reports "a 14-year-old San Diego high school student suspended earlier this week for making verbal and written threats was arrested Thursday, police said."

Meanwhile, the [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Svrluga) reports "two people were injured in a Friday morning shooting at Southeastern Louisiana University, according to a university official."

### **Trump: Democratic Memo Proves "Illegal" Surveillance Of His Campaign.**

President Trump on Saturday denounced the release of a memo authored by Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee about the Justice Department and FBI into his campaign and he argued that it proved the surveillance of his campaign had been illegal. Media coverage, which includes more than six minutes on the network newscasts, is also heavy in print and online. Reporting and analyses contrasted the memo to a previous Republican-drafted document and highlighted the response by the President and top lawmakers of both parties.

[The Hill](#) (2/24, Anapol) reports Trump [tweeted](#), "The Democrat memo response on government surveillance abuses is a total political and legal BUST. Just confirms all of the terrible things that were done. SO ILLEGAL!" He [continued](#), "Dem Memo: FBI did not disclose who the clients were - the Clinton Campaign and the DNC. Wow!" The President [added](#), "Russians had no compromising information on Donald Trump' @FoxNews Of course not, because there is none, and never was. This whole Witch Hunt is an illegal disgrace...and Obama did nothing about Russia!"

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/24, House) reports the President in an interview with Fox News on Saturday later described the memo as "a nothing." [USA Today](#) (2/24, Estepa) reports that Trump "said the document just confirmed all the allegations laid out in the GOP memo and said that the country needs to move on from all the divisiveness." He asserted, "We have to bring the country together."

[The Hill](#) (2/24, Bowden) reports Trump also [tweeted](#) Rep. Adam Schiff, the ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee, "'omitted and distorted key facts' @FoxNews So, what else is new. He is a total phony!" However, The Hill highlights that the President had "misquoted 'Fox Report' anchor Molly Line, who discussed the memo on the show," who said that Schiff "argued the Republican memo omitted and distorted key facts meant to mislead the public" while this Democratic memo "was meant to be the rebuttal and was meant to show what was left out."

[The Hill](#) (2/24, Sanchez) reports White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders in a statement similarly "argued that a memo released by Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee on Saturday fails to answer questions raised by the original GOP document made public earlier this month." Sanders said, "This politically driven document fails to answer serious concerns raised by the Majority's memorandum about the use of partisan opposition research from one candidate, loaded with uncorroborated allegations, as a basis to ask a court to approve surveillance of a former associate of another candidate, at the height of a presidential campaign." The [Daily Caller](#) (2/24, Enjeti) reports Sanders added, "As the Majority's memorandum stated, the FISA judge was never informed that Hillary Clinton and the DNC funded the dossier that was a basis for the Department of Justice's FISA application. In addition, the Minority's memo fails to even address the fact that the Deputy FBI Director told the Committee that had it not been for

the dossier, no surveillance order would have been sought."

[The Hill](#) (2/24, Greenwood) reports House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes in a speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference "said on Saturday that a Democratic rebuttal to a GOP memo released earlier this month alleging abuses by the FBI and Justice Department will not affect the substance of the document." Nunes asserted, "What you're not going to see is anything that actually rejects what was actually in our memo." In an interview with [Breitbart](#) (2/24, Starr), Nunes stated that the new memo "confirms exactly what we've said the whole time – that the FBI used dirt paid for by the Hillary campaign and the Democrat national party and didn't disclose it to the court." He added, "In fact, they went out of their way not to disclose it to the court. This is why we wanted it out, and it's amazing that the Democrats would actually take part in trying to cover this up."

However, [The Hill](#) (2/24, Bowden) reports that in response to Trump's tweets, Schiff [said](#) the President was "wrong again," as the memo "confirms the FBI acted appropriately and that Russian agents approached two of your advisors, and informed your campaign that Russia was prepared to help you by disseminating stolen Clinton emails." [The Hill](#) (2/24, Seipel) reports Schiff later [quipped](#), "Wait a minute, Mr. President. Am I a phony, or sleazy, a monster or little? Surely you know the key to a good playground nickname is consistency. I thought you were supposed to be good at this."

Meanwhile, [The Hill](#) (2/24) reports "Democratic lawmakers on Saturday praised the release of their party's rebuttal to a memo from Republicans on the House Intelligence Committee purporting to detail surveillance abuses by the Justice Department against the Trump campaign." In a statement, House Minority Leader Pelosi said the memo "helps set the record straight on Republicans' attempts to obstruct the investigation into the Trump-Russia scandal" and she asserted, "It is imperative that Republicans in Congress end their political charades." In a statement, Senate Minority Leader Schumer "lashed out at President Trump, who he accused of silencing Democratic opposition by delaying the release of the Democratic memo until redactions were made." Sen. Mark Warner, the ranking member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Rep. Ted Lieu also touted the release of the memo.

*Democratic Memo Argues Surveillance Of Page Began Prior To Dossier.* The [Washington Post](#) (2/24, A1, Demirjian, Weigel) reports in a front-page article that the House Intelligence Committee on Saturday released the "redacted memo authored by Democrats and intended to rebut GOP allegations that federal law enforcement agencies had political motivations for wiretapping one of President Trump's former campaign aides." The Post adds that "in their retort, Democrats charge that the GOP unfairly maligned the FBI and the Justice Department for citing in their surveillance application information from the author of a controversial dossier alleging that Trump had ties to Russian officials, research that was paid for by the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign."

A front-page [New York Times](#) (2/24, A1, Fandos) article says "the Democratic memo amounted to a forceful rebuttal to the president's portrayal of the Russia inquiry as a 'witch hunt' being perpetrated by politically biased leaders of the F.B.I. and the Justice Department." However, the Times says that while Democrats wanted the memo to "offer a point-by-point refutation of what it called the 'transparent' attempt by...Trump's allies on the committee to undermine the congressional and special counsel investigations into Russia's meddling in the 2016 presidential election and possible coordination with the Trump campaign," the memo "reflected an extraordinary struggle on the committee to try to shape public perceptions of the credibility of the nation's top law enforcement agencies." The Times adds: "for weeks, instead of focusing its full energy on investigating an attack on the American democratic system, the committee has been pulled into a furious effort by Mr. Trump and his allies to sow doubts about the integrity of the special counsel inquiry and the agencies conducting it."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/25, Nicholas, Tau) reports the 10-page redacted memo counters a Republican document that claimed opposition research into Trump led to the investigation of his foreign policy campaign adviser Carter Page, as does Paula Reid in the lead [CBS Weekend News](#) ☐ (2/24, lead story, 1:50, Ninan) segment. Reid stated that while Republicans "alleged that the FBI requested a warrant based on information from someone who had an anti-Trump bias," the Democratic memo "alleges that the FBI actually had an independent basis separate from the information in the infamous dossier to believe Page was knowingly helping Russian intelligence."

On the lead [NBC Nightly News](#) ☐ (2/24, lead story, 2:50, Snow) segment, White House correspondent Kelly O'Donnell reported "Democrats argue the Department of Justice followed the rules fairly in the Russia investigation." She said Democrats also "say the FBI had ample reason to believe Trump campaign aide Carter Page was acting as an agent for Russia when they sought surveillance on him" and "dispute Republicans claims of partisan bias about a key informant,

former British intelligence officer Christopher Steele, when Steele's salacious dossier about candidate Trump was presented to the FISA court." She added "Democrats insist the FISA court was told that Steele was, quote, hired by 'politically motivated US persons,' though not specifically that the DNC and Clinton campaign had paid him." According to [The Hill](#) (2/24, Anapol), "the content of the Democratic memo contradicts a key pillar of the GOP argument, that FBI and Justice Department officials with a bias against Trump improperly used the Steele dossier, which was funded in part by Hillary Clinton's campaign and the Democratic National Committee."

The [AP](#) (2/25, Jalonick) reports the memo "contends that the Justice Department provided 'additional information from multiple independent sources that corroborated Steele's reporting' in the dossier" and although "most of the details of the corroborated information are redacted," those that remain "appear to reference Page's meeting with Russian officials." The AP adds the Democratic memo "details Russian attempts to cultivate Page as a spy" and the [Washington Times](#) (2/24, Mordock, McLaughlin, Dinan) says "the contacts were so striking that the FBI interviewed Mr. Page in March 2016, at about the time he was taking a role in the Trump campaign – though surveillance on him didn't begin until months later, after he'd left the campaign."

[The Hill](#) (2/24, Anapol, Bowden) says the memo also "shows that FBI fact-finding contradicted Page's sworn testimony before the House Intelligence Committee, and corroborated parts of the Steele dossier relating to Page." Meanwhile, the [Daily Caller](#) (2/24, Ross) reports the Democrats "claim that the FISAs against Page 'allowed FBI to collect valuable intelligence,'" but "a paragraph laying out the purported evidence is largely redacted."

According to [Politico](#) (2/24, Cheney), "It's unclear whether the memo was declassified by Trump or whether the redactions advised by the FBI and Justice Department omitted any remaining classified details in the Democratic document. But it opens a new partisan front in a battle that has consumed the House Intelligence Committee and has all but derailed its efforts to probe Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election."

In addition, [Reuters](#) (2/24, Walcott, Zengerle) highlights that "the latest duel on Capitol Hill comes as Mueller's investigation gathers steam, including a guilty plea on Friday from Richard Gates, Trump's deputy campaign manager." Reuters emphasizes that the memo reveals that prior to referencing the Steele dossier, "the FBI had already opened sub-inquiries into a (redacted number of) individuals linked to the Trump campaign." While all of the names were blacked out, Reuters adds that "a footnote names Gates, former Trump National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, campaign aide George Papadopoulos, and one-time Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort. All but Page and Manafort now have pleaded guilty to federal charges and are believed to be cooperating with Mueller."

While [Bloomberg News](#) (2/24, House) attempts to fact check the two memos, [ABC World News Tonight](#)'s (2/24, story 7, 1:25, Llamas) David Wright acknowledged it is "hard to judge" the memos "because of all the redactions."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

*"Well-Heeled Investors Reap The Republican Tax Cut Bonanza."* A [New York Times](#) (2/25) editorial says that after President Trump signed the Republican tax bill into law, "companies put out cheery announcements that they were giving workers bonuses because of their expected windfalls from the tax reductions. The president and Republican lawmakers quickly held up these news releases as vindication for their argument that cutting the top federal corporate tax rate to 21 percent, from 35 percent, would boost workers' incomes." The Times, however, says that now "corporate announcements and analyst reports confirm what honest observers always said – this claim is pure fantasy." Executives are telling investors that what "they intend to do with their tax savings" is reward their stockholders.

*"Will The US Help The Saudis Get A Nuclear Weapon?"* The [New York Times](#) (2/25) editorializes that the "last thing the Middle East needs is another country with the potential to build nuclear weapons. Yet that could happen if the United States mishandles Saudi Arabia's plans to enter the nuclear power business and erect as many as 16 nuclear reactors for electricity generation over 25 years." The Times calls on Congress to "assert its right to have the final say on a deal, and set strict conditions if the administration does not," which it says "should include intrusive inspections of Saudi nuclear facilities, similar to those Iran has accepted."

## Washington Post.

*"Back To the Bad Old Days."* A [Washington Post](#) (2/25, Board) editorial writes that last week, HHS "proposed a disastrous rule that would promote even more turmoil in health insurance markets and harm some extremely vulnerable people" by allowing insurance companies to sell "virtually unregulated health policies." The Post argues that "this would signal a return to the bad old days when insurers could sharply limit benefits, impose caps on coverage and discriminate against people with preexisting conditions" – which Obamacare was "designed to eliminate." The Post writes that unless the Administration "reverses course, it will be up to the states to prevent the damage."

*"A New Superbug Threat."* The [Washington Post](#) (2/25) editorializes that a strain of typhoid fever that has broken out in Pakistan has "become extensively resistant to antibiotics," which the Post says "should be another warning that the global threat of antimicrobial resistance remains real, and urgent." The Post notes that analyses published in December by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the World Health Organization "said too few new antibiotics are under development, and too few represent new classes of drugs." The Post argues that "just as vital, the overuse of antibiotics in human and animal health must be curbed."

*"Doing 'Better' Is Not Enough."* A [Washington Post](#) (2/25) editorial criticizes the decision to allow Kelly to make the final decision in Kushner's case. The Post laments that "despite his lack of a final clearance, [Jared] Kushner has had access to the most sensitive material, including the president's daily intelligence briefing." In the wake of the Rob Porter scandal, the Post says, "It's time for a hearing at which Mr. Kelly and Mr. McGahn tell the [House Oversight Committee], under oath, what's been going on."

## Wall Street Journal.

*"Democrats For Eavesdrop Abuse."* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/25) says that the Democratic memo confirmed that the FBI used Christopher Steele's dossier, which was funded by the Clinton camp and the DNC, as part of its application for a FISA court order to surveil Carter Page. The Journal also says the Democratic memo confirmed that the FBI didn't tell the court that Democrats funded Steele's research

*"Charlie Baker And The Boston Teamsters."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/25) editorializes that Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, a Republican, should not have embraced Teamsters Local 25's support for his re-election campaign. The Journal describes the union's past legal troubles, including threats that a member made against "Top Chef" host Padma Lakshmi, as well as sexist and racist epithets that were made against staffers for the show. The Journal also opines that Baker doesn't need the union's help because of his 69% approval rating and widespread popularity in Massachusetts.

*"Xi Jinping, President For Life."* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/25) cites the Chinese state-run news agency Xinhua as revealing Sunday that the Communist Party in fact decided last month to allow President Xi Jinping to remain in power beyond 2023 – something it did not disclose at the time. That key detail, the Journal says, suggests the move was met with some resistance and could set the stage for more volatility and unpredictability in Chinese politics.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

#### *Wall Street Journal:*

[China's Communist Party Proposal Sets Stage For Xi To Hold On To Power](#)  
[Investors' Zeal To Buy Stocks With Debt Leaves Markets Vulnerable](#)  
[To Stay On The Land, American Farmers Add Extra Jobs](#)  
[White House Legal Team Considers Ways Trump Could Testify](#)  
[Supreme Court To Decide Fate Of Public-sector Unions](#)

#### *New York Times:*

[China Moves To Let Xi Stay In Power By Abolishing Term Limit](#)  
[Is This The Moment For Gun Control? A Gridlocked Congress Is Under Pressure](#)  
[At French Outpost In African Migrant Hub, Asylum For A Select Few](#)  
[Behind A Key Anti-Labor Case, A Web Of Conservative Donors](#)



[Lower Oil Prices Force Saudis To Widen Their Circle Of Friends](#)  
[Coal Country Divides Over An Unrepentant Boss's Senate Bid](#)

**Washington Post:**

[A Neo-Nazi Under Her Roof](#)  
[N. Korea Is Open To US Talks](#)  
[GOP Hill Leaders Silent On Gun Bills](#)  
[Justices To See A Familiar Face In Battle Over Speech Rights](#)  
[China Moves To Get Rid Of Term Limits, A Boost For Xi](#)  
[Feinstein Loses State Democratic Party's Backing](#)

**Financial Times:**

[US Ties De-Nuclearisation To North Korea Talks](#)  
[China Poised To End Two-Term Limit On Presidency](#)  
[GE Plans To Restate Earnings For Past Two Years](#)  
[US Lawmakers Push For Crackdown On Foreign Companies](#)

**Washington Times:**

[Congress Returns With Bipartisan Plans For Tougher Gun Control Laws](#)  
[Deputy Scot Peterson Vs. School Gunman: Who Would Have Won?](#)  
[CPAC Celebration: Conservatives Who Doubted Trump Now Glad They Were Wrong](#)  
[Democrats Play Down Dossier Role In FISA Warrant, Say Carter Page 'Of Interest' To FBI For Years](#)  
[BuzzFeed Clings To Russian IP Addresses, But No Evidence Found To Prove Steele Dossier Claims](#)  
[U.S. Reacts With Cautious Optimism To North Korea's Offer To Talk After Olympics](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Severe Weather; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Florida School Shooting-Local Community; House Intelligence Committee Memo; US-North Korea Relations; Oklahoma-Store Shooting; Robocalls; California Traffic Crash; Supermarket Explosion; Missing Boy Search; New Flu Drug; WWII Veteran.

**CBS:** Severe Weather; House Intelligence Committee Memo; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Gun Control Research; US-North Korea Relations; Syrian Civil War; Myanmar-Ethnic Crisis; UK-Gun Control; NCAA News; VR-Health Awareness; Crafted Beers.

**NBC:** US-North Korea Relations; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Severe Weather; WH-Security Clearance; China-Constitution Change; China-Flight Battery Fire; Renewable Energy-Wind Power; 2020 Tokyo Olympics; Winter Olympics Review.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida School Shooting – 9 minutes, 5 seconds  
US-North Korea Relations – 6 minutes, 35 seconds  
Severe Weather – 6 minutes, 10 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Severe Weather; Private Prison Riot; Russia Probe.

**CBS:** Severe Weather; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; House Intelligence Committee Memo; Winter Olympics Closes; Billy Graham Funeral.

**FOX:** Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Severe Weather; Box Office News.

**NPR:** Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Syrian Civil War; Texas-Capital Punishment; Billy Graham Funeral.

## **Washington Schedule**

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### **Today's Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Hosts the 2018 White House Business Session with our Nation's Governors; has lunch with Vice President Mike Pence, the Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency Scott Pruitt; meets with credit union representatives; meets with Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee Kevin Brady.  
VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins the President for the 2018 White House Business Session with

our Nation's Governors; joins the President for lunch with Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency Scott Pruitt; participates in the Indiana Society of Washington, DC's Tribute to a Hoosier Vice President and Second Lady.

**US Senate:** 3:00 PM Senate aims to end debate on 11th Circuit Court judge nominee – Senate convenes for a period of morning business, followed by the delivery of Washington's Farewell Address, then an executive session to consider the nomination of Elizabeth Branch to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, with agenda including a vote on a motion to invoke cloture on the nomination Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

5:00 PM Dem Sen. Bob Casey hosts Black History Month Symposium – Democratic Sen. Bob Casey hosts Black History Month Symposium, honoring former Philadelphia Councilwoman Marian Tasco for her dedication to public service and work to inspire future generations of leaders Location: Washington, DC <http://casey.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SenBobCasey>

Congress returns after Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period), with Democratic Sen. Gary Peters delivering Washington's Farewell Address in the Senate Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC

**US House:** 11:30 AM House Small Business Committee field hearing on workforce development – Field hearing on 'Workforce Development: Closing the Skills Gap', with testimony from Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO President Patrick Eiding; Center for Workforce Development Interim Executive Director Susan Herring; and Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry Director of Government Affairs Alex Halper Location: Boilermakers Local Lodge No. 13, 2300 New Falls Rd, Newportville, PA <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

5:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on 'H.R. 1865 – Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017', 'H.R. 4296 – To place requirements on operational risk capital requirements for banking organizations established by an appropriate Federal banking agency', and 'H.R. 4607 – Comprehensive Regulatory Review Act' Location: U.S. Capitol, H-313, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

5:00 PM House Intelligence Committee marks up its views and estimates letter – Business Meeting on 'Adoption of the Committee's FY 2019 Budget Views and Estimates Letter, pursuant to House Rule X, clause 11(c)(3)' Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-304, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseIntelComm>

Congress returns after Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period), with Democratic Sen. Gary Peters delivering Washington's Farewell Address in the Senate Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC

**Other:** 7:00 AM NAHREP Housing Policy and Hispanic Leadership Conference – National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals Housing Policy and Hispanic Lending Conference. Speakers include Republican Sen. Marco Rubio Location: Four Seasons Hotel Washington, DC, 2800 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.nahrep.org](http://www.nahrep.org) <https://twitter.com/NAHREP>

7:00 AM National Governors Association Winter Meeting concludes – National Governors Association Winter Meeting concludes, with final day agenda including governors-only meeting at the White House (7:30 AM EST), closed roundtable luncheon with senators (12:30 PM EST), Congressional briefings at the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center (2:00 PM EST and 4:00 PM EST), and receptions on 'FDI in the U.S.: Proven Partners and New Frontiers', Hart Senate Office Bldg (4:30 PM EST and 5:30 PM EST) Location: JW Marriott Washington, DC, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.nga.org> <https://twitter.com/NatlGovsAssoc>

8:30 AM National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference continues – National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference, day two, co-sponsored by Food Research and Action Center and Feeding America, in cooperation with the National CACFP Forum. Speakers today include Democratic Rep. James McGovern, Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service Administrator Brandon Lipps, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Senior Fellow Jared Bernstein, The Century Foundation Senior Fellow Denise Forte, and UnidosUS Vice President Eric Rodriguez Location: Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert St NW, Washington, DC [www.antihungerpolicyconference.org](http://www.antihungerpolicyconference.org) [#fractweets](https://twitter.com/fractweets) [#hungerpc18](https://twitter.com/hungerpc18)

10:00 AM New America discussion on 'A New National Security Innovation Base' – 'A New National Security Innovation Base' New America discussion, on what the nation's National Security Innovation Base looks like in the 21st century and how to protect and channel its power. Speakers include Republican Rep. Mike Gallagher, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy Eric Chewning, and Revolution Growth Vice President Ashley Larson Location: New America, 740 15th St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.newamerica.org/> <https://twitter.com/NewAmericaISP> #NSIB

10:30 AM National Association of Attorneys General Winter Meeting – National Association of Attorneys General Winter Meeting, with 41 state and territorial attorneys general gathering to



discuss legal issues including preventing elder abuse, the latest U.S. Supreme Court cases, and prescription drugs. Speakers include Attorney General Jeff Sessions, OMB Director and CFPB Acting Director Mick Mulvaney, House Committee on the Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte, and U.S. Surgeon General Dr Jerome Adams Location: The Ritz-Carlton, 1150 22nd St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.naag.org> [#NAAGMeeting](https://twitter.com/NatlAssnAttysGn)

12:00 PM CRFB Better Budget Process Summit – Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget Better Budget Process Summit, 'Rebuilding Confidence in Congress: Breaking Through on Budget Reform', with Republicans Sen. David Perdue and Rep. Steve Womack and Democrats Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse and Rep. John Yarmuth, plus Neil Bradley (U.S. Chamber of Commerce), Stuart Butler (Brookings Institution), Robert Fersh (Convergence Center for Policy Resolution), Emily Holubowich (Coalition for Health Funding), Frances Lee (University of Maryland), Matthew Owens (Association of American Universities), and Steve Redburn (George Washington University) Location: Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Ave NW, Washington, DC [crfb.org](http://crfb.org) <https://twitter.com/BudgetHawks>

12:30 PM Black Republican Trailblazer Awards Luncheon – Black Republican Trailblazer Awards Luncheon, with the Republican National Committee (RNC) and Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel honoring education advocate Dr. Leonard Haynes and Heritage Foundation President Kay Cole James with the Black Republican Trailblazer Award for their 'significant contributions' to the Republican Party and the U.S. Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center, 801 Mount Vernon Place NW, Washington, DC [www.gop.com](http://www.gop.com) <https://twitter.com/GOP>

2:00 PM Dem Rep. Joaquin Castro speaks on the role of ASEAN at CSIS – Center for Strategic and International Studies-Pertamina Banyan Tree Leadership Forum, with Democratic Rep. Joaquin Castro discussing the role that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) can play in a free and open Indo-Pacific region Location: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.csis.org> <https://twitter.com/CSIS>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

*John Oliver:* "But Trump's support for this clearly terrible idea [of arming teachers in classrooms] seemed to develop over the week. He actually focus-grouped it on Wednesday during a listening session, featuring survivors of the shooting – a session, incidentally, for which his own notes included a reminder to say, 'I hear you,' which is what you might write down if you were a robot pretending to be a person pretending to be a robot pretending to be a person."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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- Washington Post: Spectacular Fossils Found At Bears Ears – Right Where Trump Removed Protections.
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- Deseret (UT) News: Utah Legislature Urges Full Compensation On Rural \$ For Federal Lands.
- KSL-TV Salt Lake City: No Consolidation: All 5 Of Utah's Wildfire Dispatch Centers To Remain Open.

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- Glenwood Springs (CO) Post Independent: Garfield County Backs Moving BLM Headquarters Out West.

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- Virginians Stand Up To Trump Administration Offshore Drilling Plans At Richmond Public Meeting.
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- Associated Press: Conservationists Plan To Sue Feds Over Nearly-Extinct Fly.
- Arizona Republic: Mexican Gray Wolf Population In Arizona And New Mexico Remains Flat.
- Boulder (CO) Weekly: JeffCo School District Suspends Field Trips To Rocky Flats.
- Florida Today: Officers Go Undercover At MI Refuge.
- Associated Press: 67-Year-Old Albatross Seabird Gives Birth At Midway Atoll.

### **National Park Service**

- Washington Post: Organizers Plan For 500,000 Attendees At 'March For Our Lives' Rally In Washington.
- Associated Press: Yellowstone Bison Again Escape Holding Pen, But Most Return.
- Knoxville (TN) News Sentinel: Cades Cove Solar Array Will Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Fuel Costs At Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- Associated Press: Zion National Park Closes Climbing Cliffs To Protect Falcons.
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- New York Times.
  - "Let The Teachers Teach."
  - "Why Americans Could Believe The Worst From Russian Trolls."
- Washington Post.
  - "The Russians Are Coming. Republicans Need To Do Something About It."
  - "A Death In An Iranian Prison Is One More Shocking Sign Of Repression."
  - "What Is Donald Trump Jr. Really Peddling In India?"
- Wall Street Journal.
  - "Public Unions Vs. The First Amendment."
  - "Putin Protects Assad Again."
  - "Venezuela's 'Crypto' Con."

## Big Picture

- Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

## Washington Schedule

- Today's Events In Washington.

## Last Laughs

- Late Night Political Humor.

## DOI In The News

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### Interior Department Reveals 312 Drone Air Force, 5,000 Flights.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/22, Bedard) reports that the Interior Department has "revealed that it flies an expanded drone air force of over 300 aircraft, and that they flew nearly 5,000 flights, with many to help fight forest fires." Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said the drone program "is a perfect example of leveraging technology to fight fires in safer and more efficient ways to ensure we are protecting the men and women on the fire line, members of the public, and local communities. Coupled with more aggressive fuels management, this technology will help prevent and control catastrophic wildfires."

Also reporting are the [Sierra \(CA\) Sun Times](#) (2/22), the [St. George & Southern Utah Independent](#) (2/22), and [NextGov](#) (2/22, Corrigan).

### Spectacular Fossils Found At Bears Ears – Right Where Trump Removed Protections.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Fears, Eilperin) reports that a portion of Bears Ears National Monument that lost its protected status through a proclamation by President Trump in December contains a trove of Triassic-period fossils. Researchers announced this week that the 70-yard-long site contains "intact remains of crocodile-like animals called phytosaurs;" it "may be the densest area of Triassic period fossils in the nation, maybe the world," said contractor Rob Gay.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/22, Siegel) reports that the discovery was announced by researchers at the Western Association of Vertebrate Paleontologists conference at Dixie State University in St. George, Utah. Paleontologist Rob Gay, a contractor at the Museums of Western Colorado, said "that his project was funded by a \$25,000 grant from a Bureau of Land Management program that supports research on national monuments." However, the Wilderness Society, an environmental group, "warns that the BLM funding is now unavailable because Trump removed protections of the region in December when he shrunk Bears Ears by more than 1 million acres."

### Watchdog Seeks Probe Into Zinke Gun-Club Outing.

[Politico](#) (2/22, Lefebvre) reports that "a government watchdog group asked the Federal Election Commission on Thursday to investigate Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's appearance at Virgin Islands Fundraiser, and it plans to request that Interior's Inspector General probe what it contends is his 'pattern of violations' of ethics regulations." The Campaign Legal Center wrote in a draft complaint it plans to send to the inspector general Monday, "In his short time in office, Secretary Zinke's boundary-pushing – and, apparently, boundary-crossing – conduct has set a poor ethical example for the department's staff. He appears to have violated ethics-related laws and regulations on several occasions and wasted taxpayer funds on frivolities. As a cabinet-level official, he owes more to the public he serves."

### **Utah Legislature Urges Full Compensation On Rural \$ For Federal Lands.**

The [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/22, O'Donoghue) reports that Utah received \$38.4 million from the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program in the last year, but "lawmakers overwhelmingly believe it's chump change compared with what they deserve." Both the House and Senate in the Utah Legislature on Thursday "unanimously signed off on a resolution and a subsequent bill that directs a more thorough accounting of the lost dollars." HCR19, sponsored by Rep. Ken Ivory "calls on the U.S. president, Congress and the Utah delegation to ensure timely and full payments to rural counties to make up for that loss of revenue."

### **No Consolidation: All 5 Of Utah's Wildfire Dispatch Centers To Remain Open.**

[KSL-TV](#) Salt Lake City (2/22, Klopfenstein) reports that "after debating for more than a year on whether or not to consolidate three of Utah's five interagency wildfire dispatch centers, officials have decided to keep all five open." According to Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands spokesman Jason Curry, "representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Utah Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service met on Feb. 15 to discuss the plan for the dispatch centers." BLM Utah State Director Ed Roberson "said it ultimately was decided that the state needed all five centers in order to maintain service at the current level of safety."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Moab \(UT\) Sun News](#) (2/22, Herndon).

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Legislators Buck Senate Co-Chairs, Keep Casino Expansion Alive .**

The [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (2/22, Pazniokas) reports that the Connecticut state Senate's "Public Safety and Security Committee voted 18-6 to override the Senate co-chairs" and add consideration of a competitive bidding process for a potential commercial casino in Bridgeport to the agenda, then approved "the subject for further debate and a public hearing." The committee approved a broadly written concept, "allowing the legislature to consider opening Connecticut to commercial casinos beyond the one the state has authorized the tribal casino owners to jointly develop in East Windsor to undercut an MGM casino under construction in Springfield." Senate Co-Chairs Tony Guglielmo and Tim Larson "had refused to place on the agenda casino expansion bills that were favored by the House co-chair, Rep. Joe Verrengia." Larson said of MGM, "I just don't trust them." [CT News Junkie](#) (2/22, Stuart) reports that Sen. Ed Gomes, D-Bridgeport, said of the vote, "It's about being fair and having a public hearing and have everything come out." Rep. Verrengia "felt the debate on whether to open a commercial casino in Connecticut should go forward this year because things have changed." Verrengia said, "The legal landscape has changed. ... We were led to believe at the time that an approval from the BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] was imminent that the tribes would be up and running and build through litigation, which is not the case."

The [Hartford \(CT\) Courant](#) (2/22, Gosselin) reports that "Rep. Jeffrey J. Berger, D-Waterbury, pushed for a hearing on the competitive bidding bill and a debate on the merits of open competition — and garnered significant support on the committee." Berger said, "The process here is important, and the process here is that there are many members certainly in the House — not sure how it falls in the Senate — but certainly many members and colleagues both as Democrats and Republicans in the House are very concerned about having an open, public discussion on a proposal for commercial gaming." Larson, who represents East Hartford, strongly criticized MGM's proposal, saying, "And somebody can come in with a one-trick pony and promise everyone the moon and the fence around it, but I just don't trust it. And when you come after my district specifically, I get a little offended by that." Additional coverage is provided by the [AP](#) (2/22).

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Garfield County Backs Moving BLM Headquarters Out West.**

The [Glenwood Springs \(CO\) Post Independent](#) (2/22, Zorn) reports that "coming on the heels of Department of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's announcement that he'd like to relocate the Bureau of Land Management Headquarters out of Washington, D.C., to the West, Garfield County this week joined Mesa County and several other Colorado counties in endorsing the idea." On

Tuesday, the three Garfield County commissioners "signed a letter supporting the relocation of the BLM headquarters to Grand Junction." The letter states that "the vast amount of natural resources, ranging from oil, gas, coal, grazing for livestock, wildlife habitat, hunting, streams and trails contained on federal lands" and the "economic vitality of Mesa County" make Grand Junction the best location for the new headquarters.

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Alaskans Comment On Trump Draft Proposal To Open State Waters To Oil, Gas Development.**

[KTOO-FM](#) Juneau, AK (2/22, Harball) reports Alaskans "were able to weigh in on the Trump administration's proposal to open almost all Alaska waters to oil and gas development" during a Wednesday night meeting that served as "the only opportunity for Alaskans to comment on the draft proposal in person." A protest was organized outside the meeting by Adrienne Titus of the nonprofit Native Movement, who said, "[w]hen it comes to oil and gas development in our water and on our land, it's going to highly affect not just our land and our water, but our people, our cultures, who we are — our identity, our food security."

Also reporting is [Courthouse News](#) (2/22, LOUIS).

### **Crystal Coast Residents Fight Plans For Offshore Drilling.**

[WNCT-TV](#) Greenville, NC (2/22, Martin) reports a group of North Carolinians opposed to the offshore drilling plan are planning to travel to Raleigh "next week to add their voices against offshore drilling." Group organizer and Crystal Coast Waterkeeper Larry Baldwin said, "The risks are just too great. ... And to me it's not a matter of if we have a spill, it's a matter of when."

### **Virginians Stand Up To Trump Administration Offshore Drilling Plans At Richmond Public Meeting.**

The [Alexandria \(VA\) News](#) (2/22) reports Virginians in coastal communities and state lawmakers are "standing up to the Trump Administration and its plans to open our coast to offshore drilling" following the BOEM's public hearing in Richmond on Wednesday. U.S. Rep. David McEachin said, "[t]his ill-conceived plan by the Trump Administration is irresponsible and members from both sides of the aisle stand against it. Virginia has nothing to gain from opening our shores to drilling and everything to lose." State, local, and business leaders also cited a number of potential negative impacts to the local economy, environment and state of military readiness brought about by the plan.

### **House Speaker Has Promised Permanent Offshore Drilling Ban.**

The [Naples \(FL\) Daily News](#) (2/20, Stanley) reported that House Speaker Paul Ryan promised Tuesday to bring forward legislation to permanently extend a moratorium to ban offshore drilling from Florida's Gulf Coast, according to Rep. Francis Rooney. "Republicans used to be stewards of the environment as well," Rooney said, adding "I'm just going to keep fighting hard for right now."

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Reservoir Near Carlsbad To Be Filled With Water.**

[KRQE-TV](#) Albuquerque, NM (2/22) reports that the Bureau of Reclamation next week will "begin moving water down the Pecos River from the Brantley reservoir to the Avalon reservoir." The reservoir is "expected to be ready for the upcoming irrigation season."

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **New Surge In Civil Lawsuits Tied To Deepwater Horizon Spill: Study.**

[The Hill](#) (2/22, Green) reports on the recent flurry of "federal civil environmental lawsuits" stemming from recent decisions and settlements related to the "Deepwater Horizon lawsuit in Louisiana, according to a report released Wednesday." According to Syracuse University's Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC), some "745 civil environmental lawsuits were



filed in federal court” in the last quarter, a significant increase from the 198 suits filed the previous quarter. The “majority of the cases in the past quarter were driven by litigation in the Eastern District of Louisiana following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the study found.” The report “found that when taking out the environmental litigation stemming from the Louisiana gulf spill, federal civil environmental suits filed have actually steadily dropped overall from their height in the October 2016 quarter.”

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **ALASKA: Interior To Move Quickly On ANWR Leasing.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/21) reports Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) addressed an Anchorage business group on Monday and said the federal government is hoping to hold an oil and gas lease sale for ANWR within three years. Murkowski said, “The push right now within Interior is to [issue leases] before four years. ... They are working fairly and aggressively to put in place, to lay the groundwork for what comes next ... because once you get those leases out into the hands of those who can then move forward, it’s tougher to throw the roadblocks in place.” At the same time, Murkowski warned that environmental activists “are already planning to go to court in an effort to block oil development on the coastal plain.”

### **Conservationists Plan To Sue Feds Over Nearly-Extinct Fly.**

The [AP](#) (2/22) reports that an environmental group plans to sue the federal government, “claiming it’s failed to protect a nearly-extinct fly in California’s agricultural heartland.” The Center for Biological Diversity filed notice Thursday that it will sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the San Joaquin Valley giant flower-loving fly. The FWS was “petitioned in 2014 to list the fly as endangered.” The Center for Biological Diversity “says the agency determined in 2015 that such protection might be warranted but has done nothing since then.”

### **Mexican Gray Wolf Population In Arizona And New Mexico Remains Flat.**

The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/22, Devoid) reports that “the endangered Mexican gray wolf population leveled off in 2017 after showing stronger growth the year before.” The population increased “by at least one, to 114 wolves in the wild throughout Arizona and New Mexico.” According to the article, “last year’s lack of growth only increases wolf advocates’ worries that the plan is insufficient.”

### **JeffCo School District Suspends Field Trips To Rocky Flats.**

The [Boulder \(CO\) Weekly](#) (2/22, Schlossberg) reports that “students attending Jefferson County Public Schools aren’t likely to be going on any field trips to the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge, 4,883 acres of open space surrounding the former nuclear weapons facility site 10 miles south of Boulder.” On Feb. 8, JeffCo Superintendent Jason Glass “sent a memo to school staff stating that, ‘out of an abundance of caution for our students, I am hereby directing staff to schedule no visits to the Rocky Flats Wildlife Refuge without requesting prior approval from my office.’” The memo came following “a Jan. 10 meeting between Glass and the Rocky Flats Technical Group, a collection of experts – including University of Colorado Boulder Professor Emeritus of Biology Dr. Harvey Nichols, chemist Anne Fenerty, Gale Biggs, Ph.D., and Jon Lipsky, the former Federal Bureau of Investigation agent who led the 1989 raid on Rocky Flats – focusing on the public health implications of opening the Refuge to recreation.”

### **Officers Go Undercover At MI Refuge.**

[Florida Today](#) (2/22, Sargent) reports that “during an undercover detail dubbed ‘Duck Under Cover’ at the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and surrounding areas during the 2017-18 waterfowl season, law enforcement officers issued more than 50 state and federal citations.” The citations included “hunting over bait, lead shot violations, illegal entry, exceeding the bag limit, no permit, attempts to take ducks outside of legal shooting hours, interference with other hunters, early entry, unplugged shotguns, plus multiple boating and refuge-specific rule violations.” Federal officers “contacted over 300 hunters during the November-January season.”

### **67-Year-Old Albatross Seabird Gives Birth At Midway Atoll.**

The [AP](#) (2/23) reports that a 67-year-old albatross named Wisdom is a mother again. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration officials said Wisdom gave birth to her new chick Feb. 6



at the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

## National Park Service

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### Organizers Plan For 500,000 Attendees At 'March For Our Lives' Rally In Washington.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Moyer) reports that "organizers of a rally against mass shootings planned for next month in Washington are expecting up to 500,000 attendees, according to an event permit application." The application, which was "filed this week with the National Park Service," indicates "the 'March For Our Lives' will be March 24, although a location hasn't been determined." Mike Litterst, a spokesman for the National Park Service, "said that organizers initially proposed holding the event on the Mall, but are looking at moving the rally to another location in Washington."

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (2/22, Samuels).

### Yellowstone Bison Again Escape Holding Pen, But Most Return.

The [AP](#) (2/22) reports that "for the second time this winter, someone broke into a holding pen for Yellowstone National Park bison, allowing the escape of 73 animals captured to prevent the spread of a wildlife disease." According to park officials, "the Stephens Creek pen was opened Wednesday night or early Thursday morning."

[KRTV-TV](#) Great Falls, MT (2/22, Sherman) reports that most of the bison "remained in the immediate area" and "returned to the pen via the same illegal fence openings over the course of the morning." [KFBB-TV](#) Great Falls, MT (2/22, Gravlee) reports that "park staff repaired the fence and re-secured the facility."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/22, Lutey).

*Environmentalists Trying To Block Hazing, Quarantine Of Yellowstone Bison.* The [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (2/22, Wright) reports that "an environmental law firm has sued to block the capture and hazing of bison on the north side of Yellowstone National Park, arguing that the animals need to be allowed to travel north toward the Paradise Valley." The Cottonwood Environmental Law Center is asking a federal judge "to prevent the various state and federal agencies that manage bison from enforcing a bison tolerance boundary at Yankee Jim Canyon and to block the quarantine of any bison." The suit claims "that the addition of new tribal bison hunters in concert with potential hazing operations creates a public safety problem."

### Cades Cove Solar Array Will Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Fuel Costs At Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (2/22, Crocker) reports that Great Smoky Mountains National Park officials "announced the completion of a solar energy project at Cades Cove Thursday." The project will cut "greenhouse gas emissions by 23 tons per year and fuel costs by \$14,000 per year." According to the article, "the park previously used a diesel-fuel generator for power at the site, which caused noise disruptions to park programs and to visitors taking in the historic landscape."

The [Maryville \(TN\) Daily Times](#) (2/23) reports that Park Superintendent Cassius Cash called the completed project "a great step in making park operations more environmentally friendly." He said, "The solar panels will provide a great, natural source of energy for the Cable Mill Area that enables us to provide a better visitor experience and to be better stewards of the park."

### Zion National Park Closes Climbing Cliffs To Protect Falcons.

The [AP](#) (2/22) reports that Zion National Park is "closing access to 13 popular rock-climbing cliffs as part of an annual effort to protect sensitive nesting sites for peregrine falcons." The National Park Service "announced this week that climbing routes will close March 1 to let wildlife biologists monitor nesting activity of the formerly endangered raptors." According to the article, "officials plan to reopen sites that don't have nests by late April or early May."

### Natchez Trace Parkway's Risser Receives Safety Honor.

The [Florence \(AL\) Times Daily](#) (2/22, Corey) reports that "Natchez Trace Parkway Superintendent Mary Risser has been recognized by the National Park Service Traffic Safety Coalition as 2017 Superintendent of the Year." Risser "said rangers are employing a variety of techniques to reduce motorists' speed on the parkway and studies are being conducted to learn where collisions and fatalities are most common and researching ways to make these areas safer."

## **Beck Farmstead In Jefferson Now Listed On National Register Of Historic Places.**

The [Fort Atkinson \(WI\) Daily Union](#) (2/22, Spangler) reports that the Michael and Margaritha Beck Farmstead in Jefferson has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Labor Market Improving In Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, But Hurricane Recovery Still 'Hampered'.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Craig) reports that Federal Reserve Bank of New York economists said on Thursday that economic turmoil caused by Hurricane Maria "Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands is not likely to be as severe or long-lasting as the financial damage New Orleans suffered after Hurricane Katrina, even though tens of thousands of residents have fled the islands, creating uncertainty about their financial future." Federal Reserve Bank of New York President William C. Dudley "said there are signs that the local labor market is stabilizing." Dudley commented, "As repair and rebuilding efforts get underway in both Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, jobs are being created in sectors such as construction. ... These job gains are expected to continue for some time to come."

*GWU Experts Tapped To Review Hurricane Maria Death Toll In Puerto Rico.* The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Hernández) reports that officials in San Juan announced that a "team of George Washington University researchers will lead an independent investigation into Hurricane Maria's death toll in Puerto Rico and will examine the methods local government officials used to count hurricane-related fatalities in the aftermath of the" hurricane. At a news conference, Gov. Ricardo Rosselló said, "I want to know the truth of the number the same as you do. ... We want to get as close as the most accurate number as possible." Epidemiologist Carlos Santos-Burgoa will lead the research team, and it "will be able to determine an approximate death toll" within three months, according to Milken Institute School of Public Health Dean Lynn Goldman.

## **Office Of Surface Mining**

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### **\$1.9 Million In Federal Funds To Help Fix Swansea School Damaged By Mine Collapse.**

The [Metro East \(IL\) Sun](#) (2/22, Johns) reports that "five months after Wolf Branch Middle School in Swansea was shut down due to structural damage from caused by the ground sinking, the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation (OSMRE) has approved nearly \$1.9 million for the state to restore the school site." The OSMRE "recently approved the Abandoned Mine Land project (AML) which will allow the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) AML Emergency Program to oversee restoring Wolf Branch which was closed for safety reasons and its over 450 students relocated to a nearby school."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Two USGS Scientists Leave After Data Clash With Leadership.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/22, Doyle) reports that "the protest departures of two top U.S. Geological Survey officials put a spotlight on how the Interior Department employs scientific data and on the sometimes strained relations between political appointees and professional staff." Murray Hitzman and Larry Meinert, "both holders of Stanford University doctorates in geology, left USGS in the wake of what they say was an improper request for energy information from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke." The two "say Zinke breached scientific integrity policies when he sought information on the energy potential within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska prior to its official publication." Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift "cited a determination from the department solicitor's office that the secretary and deputy secretary retain 'the authority to review data, draft reports, or other information as [they deem] necessary.'" William Werkheiser, the USGS acting director, added in a statement: "I do not believe that current or proposed practices for the notification of DOI leadership constitutes a loss of scientific integrity. I do not see the issue outlined as one of scientific integrity. In fact, at no time was USGS asked to change or alter any of the findings for the assessment."

Also reporting is [KTOO-FM Juneau \(AK\)](#) Juneau, AK (2/22, Ruskin).

*Watchdog Groups Create Guide To Help Feds Protect Themselves Against Political Misconduct.*

[Government Executive](#) (2/22, Katz) reports that “federal scientists should write down all instances of agency personnel interfering with their work, a group of government watchdog and employee advocate groups warned this week.” Doing so “will help them protect both themselves and their work.” The groups released a guide for “federal scientists to prevent political misconduct titled ‘How Federal Scientists Can Protect Science for the Public Good,’ in which they emphasized the importance of recording notes.” According to the article, “documenting potential abuses is particularly important ‘in a hostile environment for science,’ the groups said, and will enable employees to protect their own careers and ‘uphold scientific integrity.’”

### **Wetlands In California And Oregon Could Disappear With Sea Level Rise.**

[Newsweek](#) (2/22, Pereira) reports that “tidal wetlands along the West coast are vulnerable to sea level rise too, particularly in California and Oregon,” according to a new study published Wednesday in *Science Advances*. Researchers “discovered that under a high sea level rise scenario, 83 percent of all marsh habitats would be lost to mud and open water—with all sites in California and Oregon lost entirely.” The new study, according to Karen Thorne, lead author and principal investigator at the U.S. Geological Survey’s Western Ecological Research Center, “helps decision makers—whether they be policy makers, private companies, or city leaders—make more informed decisions about how to handle sea level rise in the next several decades.”

### **Additional Coverage.**

- *The Costs Of Waiting For A Volcano To Erupt.* [Forbes](#) (2/16, Ward).
- *Swarm Of 200 Earthquakes Rocks Yellowstone’s Supervolcano.* [New York Post](#) (2/22, Seidel).
- *West County Streams Flooding.* [Coldwater \(MI\) Daily Reporter](#) (2/22, Reid).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Trump’s Rush To Drill On Public Land Is The Opposite Of ‘America First’.**

In an op-ed for the [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Hayes), David J. Hayes, a former deputy secretary of the Interior Department during the Obama Administration, writes that the Trump Administration’s “fossil fuel-is-king approach does the exact opposite of putting America first when it comes to using public lands.” Hayes accuses Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and his team of “consciously and aggressively casting aside a long list of environmental, health and safety protections for valued public lands, as well as rules that protect taxpayers from being fleeced by energy companies.” Hayes acknowledges that President Trump is pursuing deregulation to live up to campaign promises, but he argues that “there’s a difference between carefully considered deregulation and heedless abandonment of environmental obligations.”

### **Energy Dominance Takes A Toll On Public Lands, Public Input And Other Industries.**

In an editorial, the [Southwest Colorado Journal](#) (2/22) argues that the Trump Administration’s “actions in the past year that prioritize the development of fossil fuels to achieve energy dominance are actions that ignore the reality of fossil-fuel-driven climate change; they will benefit our economy in the short term while ignoring the long-term impacts.” Moreover, the paper says, “what they also ignore is the public, which owns these lands.” It asserts that “leasing plans were created to bridge Washington and the West,” but “scrapping them flies in the face of this administration’s interest in ‘giving local people back their say in public lands management.’”

### **Markets Trump Policy In 2017.**

In a contributing piece for [Forbes](#), (2/22, Mikulska, Maher) the Baker Institute argues that while the Trump administration has acted on its commitment to American “energy dominance” through “a set of policies designed to deregulate and encourage oil and gas activity,” a policy approach related to tax and trade “can have a more immediate effect on U.S. oil and gas industry.” The Baker Institute says that lower corporate tax rates and reduced regulations could lead to a faster pace of U.S. oil and gas development, but these factors “could be muted if U.S. trade policy evolves toward increased protectionism.”

### **Public Meeting On Offshore Drilling Disappointed Ocean Advocates.**

In an op-ed for the [Raleigh \(NC\) News & Observer](#) (2/22, Simmons), ocean enthusiast Mitzi Simmons recounts her visit to the S.C. State House for the BOEM hearing on offshore drilling and says “[i]f we are counting on the BOEM process to enact stewardship toward our seas, we are in

deep trouble.” Simmons compares attendees at the BOEM meeting in South Carolina to “cattle, or in this case, sea cows being led down the chute to slaughter,” as participants “are herded along what amounts to an indoctrination line.” Simmons says the BOEM meeting format “willfully dilutes the impact of coastal voices who simply love our seas and know the greed play of offshore drilling is both dangerous and wrong.”

### **Former Acadia Superintendent: Trump’s Proposed Budget Cuts Threaten National Parks.**

In an op-ed for the [Portland \(ME\) Press Herald](#) (2/23, Steele), Sheridan Steele, a retired National Park Service superintendent at Acadia and other national parks and a member of the Executive Committee of the Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks, writes that President Trump and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke have “called for a 17 percent cut in the annual operating budget of national parks, including Acadia, in their proposed 2019 budget.” According to Steele, “even a 10 percent reduction in operating funds could essentially eliminate Acadia’s entire seasonal workforce,” and “the loss of these 160 temporary employees would dramatically curtail or end routine visitor services, diminish resource protection and allow Acadia to deteriorate and fall into disrepair.” Steele warns that “without seasonal rangers, emergency response times would slow and some relatively minor calls for assistance would likely go unanswered.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Block Offshore Drilling.* [Eugene \(OR\) Register-Guard](#) (2/22).
- *Wild Horse Issue Needs A Compromise Solution.* [Mesquite \(NV\) Local News](#) (2/22, Mitchell).
- *Wildlife In CVNP Abundant.* [West Side \(OH\) Leader](#) (2/22, Vasarhelyi).
- *Reckoning With History: The Antiquities Act Quandary.* [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (2/22, Sowards).

## **Top National News**

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### **Trump Touts Proposal To Arm “Gun Adept Teachers” With Military Experience.**

To largely unfavorable media coverage, President Trump yesterday took to Twitter to defend an idea he proposed Wednesday during an event with school shooting victims – and to take issue with some media outlets’ characterization of it. In a series of tweets, Trump [wrote](#), “I never said ‘give teachers guns’ like was stated on Fake News @CNN & @NBC. What I said was to look at the possibility of giving ‘concealed guns to gun adept teachers with military or special training experience – only the best. 20% of teachers, a lot, would now be able to... immediately fire back if a savage sicko came to a school with bad intentions.” To [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/22, lead story, 5:10, Muir), however, Trump “seemed somewhat conflicted, first tweeting, ‘I never said give teachers guns,’ and then clarifying he meant ‘teachers with military or special training experience.’” The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/22, story 2, 3:55, Glor) reported Trump also “endorsed financial incentives for teachers with handguns,” saying, “Give them a little bit of a bonus. Frankly, they’d feel more comfortable having the gun anyway. But you give them a little bit of a bonus.”

Trump went on to [tweet](#) yesterday, “History shows that a school shooting lasts, on average, 3 minutes. It takes police & first responders approximately 5 to 8 minutes to get to site of crime. Highly trained, gun adept, teachers/coaches would solve the problem instantly, before police arrive. GREAT DETERRENT!” Trump followed up on the same subject after a White House meeting with local and state officials where, according to [Politico](#) (2/22, Nelson, Lima), he “brushed off comments by Florida Department of Education Commissioner Pam Stewart about active-shooter drills,” and “said his preference would be for a ‘hardened school.’” In its lead story, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/22, lead story, 5:10, Muir) showed Trump saying, “Instead of advertising ‘this school has no guns, we are gun-free,’ you let people know the opposite: ‘You come into our schools, you are going to be dead, and it’s going to be fast.’” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/22, Bykowicz, Peterson, Nicholas) notes the President also said, “I think [with] a concealed permit for teachers, and letting people know there are people in the building with a gun, you won’t have... these shootings.”

Typical of the negative media reviews for Trump proposal was [USA Today](#) (2/22, Jackson, King), which remarks on the “opposition from law enforcement groups and teachers’ unions who warn that more guns in schools would only make them more dangerous.” The [AP](#) (2/22, Thompson), for example, indicates “the president of the 1.7 million-member American Federation

of Teachers, Randi Weingarten, called arming teachers a horrible idea," while "the National Association of School Resource Officers, which provides training to school-based law enforcement officers," also "said it opposes arming teachers."

□ [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/22, story 2, 3:05, Jackson) reported that in Parkland, "Stoneman Douglas teacher Greg Pittman, who owns a gun but keeps it at home, says he" also "worries about arming teachers." Pittman was shown saying, "I want to educate someone's life, not take their life." The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Wagner, Johnson) says "some criminologists have questioned" the "reasoning" behind Trump's position, "pointing out that some people who plan to commit mass shootings are prepared to die in the process," and the [New York Times](#) (2/22, Davis, Sullivan) describes the President as facing "intense pressure to embrace stiffer gun restrictions," but choosing to seize on "a proposal backed by the National Rifle Association." Another [New York Times](#) (2/22, Hartocollis, Fortin) story states that "most law enforcement experts argue that teachers should not carry guns," as "accidents happen. Guns can fall out of holsters, be taken from the classroom or accidentally discharge."

□ [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/22, story 2, 3:05, Jackson) reported that "for...Trump, more guns, not fewer, could be what stops students from getting shot if those weapons are in the hands of some teachers." NBC asked White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah, "If 20 percent of public school teachers were armed, that would work out to more than 600,000 teachers nationwide. How are schools supposed to pay for bonuses for armed teachers, as the President suggests?" Shah was shown saying, "I think if we find the policy solutions that make the most sense, that we can get by and for, we'll figure out the rest of these other pieces that you outline."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/22, Sherfinski) reports that in remarks before the CPAC conference, NRA vice president Wayne LaPierre yesterday "called for more trained armed security personnel in schools," and "said the idea that armed security makes people less safe is 'completely ridiculous.'" [The Hill](#) (2/22, Kamisar) notes that he said, "The whole idea from some of our opponents that armed security makes us less safe is completely ridiculous. If that's true, armed security makes us less safe, let's just go ahead and remove it from everywhere. Let's remove it from the White House, from Capitol Hill, and remove it from all of Hollywood." [USA Today](#) (2/22, Collins) further quotes LaPierre as saying, "Evil walks among us, and God help us if we don't harden our schools and protect our kids. ... To stop a bad guy with a gun it takes a good guy with a gun."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/22, Sherfinski) reports Sen. Ted Cruz "offered qualified support to calls for arming teachers in the wake of last week's Florida school shooting, saying it shouldn't be compulsory but that it would serve to make schools safer." Cruz said at the CPAC conference, "I think it makes perfect sense that if teachers want to exercise their right to keep and bear arms, that it will only make schools safer. ... I don't think you should make teachers do that, but if a teacher is comfortable and wants to be prepared to defend himself or herself, that's a good thing."

The [Palm Beach \(FL\) Post](#) (2/22, Quarrinton) reports "Palm Beach County educators, parents and cops rejected...Trump's call to arm certain teachers to deter school shootings," and quotes Sheriff Ric Bradshaw as saying that "arming teachers 'is not going to be the answer.'"

In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/22) notes Trump's support for arming certain teachers, and adds, "Thus did Mr. Trump parrot a tired shibboleth repeated once again on Thursday by...LaPierre." To the Times, "The best way to prevent the threat of a bad guy with a gun is to keep him from getting the sort of battlefield weapon the Parkland killer used, by banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and by tightening background checks." Combat veteran Ashley Nicolas, meanwhile, writes in the [New York Times](#) (2/22) about her war experiences in Afghanistan and criticizes "people would prefer to subject our children to daily interactions with armed guards and our teachers to the awful possibility of using deadly force rather than engage in a principled conversation about gun control. ... Yes, we need to arm our teachers – with the support of effective gun control."

Rep. Hakeem Jeffries said on □ [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/22), "It seems to me to be a very unreasonable knee-jerk proposal, that if he was going to float this out there publicly, at least he could have had some consultation with the actual teachers who would be compelled, not just to be responsible for the education of our children, but under the Trump model, to be required to train, to carry a gun, and to intervene to the extent that a school is impacted by a mass shooting. Seems to be wildly irresponsible. John Wayne-like, something that only President Trump could propose in the midst of a national tragedy."

Jeffrey Toobin said, also on □ [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/22), "There are 3.5 million teachers in schools in America. If you're going to arm 20 to 40 percent of them, you are arming 700,000



to 1.4 million teachers. That's a great new market for gun manufacturers. They're going to like this idea. But how many teachers want to have guns? How many teachers are qualified to have guns? Does this idea make any sense at all? It strikes me as complete insanity."

*Eight States Allow Teachers To Be Armed, Four Other Considering It.* [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/22, story 2, 3:05, Jackson) reported that "right now eight states across the country let teachers carry concealed weapons, including Oklahoma, where this school sign warns people some staff members can be armed."

According to the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/22, story 3, 4:15, Glor), "At least four states are considering legislation now that would allow educators to carry a concealed firearm in schools." The subsequent report by Nikki Battiste shadowed "a science teacher who carries a gun in his rural Colorado classroom." His "school has other armed staff. Each had to pass a background check and a psychological evaluation." CBS added that "the superintendent says other schools considering arming their staffs have reached out to him for guidance."

*Florida Senate President Backs Arming Teachers, Likely To Unveil Legislation Today.* The [Tampa \(FL\) Tribune](#) (2/22, Mower) reports "Florida Senate President Joe Negron said Thursday that he supports arming school teachers, endorsing a controversial proposal a day after US Sen. Marco Rubio rejected it." Said Negron, "The concept of having teachers who are trained and have appropriate credentials being able to be armed to protect students, I would support that." The Tribune adds that "despite pushback from teachers, Negron's endorsement means that the proposal is likely to make it into a package of gun-related bills that will be made public Friday, in response to last week's shooting at a Broward County high school that left 17 people dead."

*Florida's Scott To Unveil School Violence Proposal Today.* The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Costa) reports that "with Florida now at the epicenter of a fast-changing national gun debate, the state's Republican governor is so far refusing to budge from his long-standing opposition to new limits on firearms." Gov. Rick Scott, "who holds an A+ rating from the National Rifle Association and is preparing to enter what would be a hotly-contested Senate race, stands in contrast to fellow Republicans such as Sen. Marco Rubio and President Trump who in recent days have expressed openness to some new gun regulations." At any rate, "the governor is planning to roll out his own legislative proposal Friday that, according to a spokesman, will be 'aimed at keeping Florida schools safe and keeping firearms out of the hands of mentally ill people.'"

### **Trump Says He Will Seek Stronger Background Checks, "Raising Age To 21," Bump Stock Ban.**

To much less media attention, the President also [tweeted](#) yesterday, "I will be strongly pushing Comprehensive Background Checks with an emphasis on Mental Health. Raise age to 21 and end sale of Bump Stocks! Congress is in a mood to finally do something on this issue – I hope!" The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Parker, Rucker) reports, "In the end, the response to the deadly mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School unfurled in classic Trump fashion: He floated policies without offering specifics."

The [New York Times](#) (2/22, Baker, Shear) reports that "the battles waged after shootings in Newtown, Conn.; Orlando, Fla.; Las Vegas; and Sutherland Springs, Tex., began playing out all over, presumably heading toward the same stalemate." Yet "this time, a few things are different: The gun control side has developed a well-financed infrastructure," and "another difference is an unpredictable president who belongs to the National Rifle Association and promotes the N.R.A.-favored solution of arming trained teachers but has also embraced a couple of modest gun control measures opposed by gun rights groups."

Presidential counselor Kellyanne Conway, asked on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (2/22) if Trump will solve the school shooting problem, said, "I believe can he and he will. I think we should all be grateful that Donald J. Trump is the President at this time. ... For the President of the United States to welcome these people into his house yesterday. They were in the state dining room, and to just listen, he didn't make it about himself as politicians often do. He didn't interrupt them. He spoke very little, very sparingly. He and the Vice President took into account all of the I think the emotion and the grief but also the resolve and the purposefulness."

Broadcasting from CPAC, Sean Hannity said on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (2/22), "You have to give the President a lot of credit because instead of engaging in the same old tired back and forth, repeating the same talking points, the politicians, the media use after these tragedies, he is actually trying to come up with solutions, solving the problem. Now, here's the bottom line. We have a choice in all of this. Do we keep having the exact same political debate that we have had ongoing since Columbine that's not going to change anybody's minds or do we actually fix the problem? Do we want to protect our children?"

Steve Hayes of the Weekly Standard said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/22), "It's worth looking at hardening the schools. I am skeptical of arming teachers, depending on how you would carry that out. It doesn't seem to be an obvious solution. And a lot of things that are being talked about right now, background checks, raising the age, are things that have been talked about again and again and again. It's hard to see, for instance, if you raise the age, a determined 20-year-old not being able to get the kind of weapon that he would want to get to shoot up a school because you change the law."

Mollie Hemingway of The Federalist said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/22), "The NRA has shown flexibility on bump stocks. The idea that you would limit gun purchasing to people who are 21 years of age is going to be a very difficult sell not just to the NRA but to a whole swath of people."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, O'Keefe) reports that Sen. Pat Roberts, "a Republican...long supported" by the NRA, said yesterday "there should be an age limit on buying the AR-15." Said Roberts, "This is an opportunity, if you look at these youngsters who are so emotionally tied in to this grief of losing their friends – but it's more than gun control. But I think we're ready as a Congress to actually pass something, and I think it's going to be better background checks. Certainly nobody under 21 should have an AR-15."

**DOJ To Prioritize Prosecutions For Lying In Background Checks.** The [New York Times](#) (2/22, Watkins, Benner) reports that DOJ "plans to ask United States attorneys to prioritize the prosecutions of prospective gun buyers who lie on federal background check forms, according to two law enforcement officials briefed on the decision." The move "would essentially enforce existing laws that govern gun purchases," allowing "the Trump administration to take action on gun-related violence without riling opponents of more restrictive gun policies."

**White House: Trump Opposes Assault Weapons Ban.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/22, Miller) reports the White House said yesterday that Trump "remains opposed to an assault weapon ban as he considers steps to prevent gun violence in schools, the White House said Thursday." White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah "noted Mr. Trump's opposition to bans on military-style, semi-automatic rifles when he ran for president in 2016," and added, "That hasn't changed."

**President Warns About Children's Exposure To Violent Video Games.** [USA Today](#) (2/20, Toppo) reports that "in the wake of last week's shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., critics again pointed to violent video games as an instigator of real-life violence." The President "joined the chorus, warning about children's exposure to violence in video games, movies and on the Internet." Said Trump, "We have to do something about maybe what they're seeing and how they're seeing it. ... We may have to talk about that also." USA Today adds that "a neighbor of accused shooter Nikolas Cruz told the [Miami Herald](#) (2/17, Brown) that Cruz 'escaped his misery' by playing video games for as much as 15 hours a day." Said the neighbor, "It was kill, kill, kill, blow up something, and kill some more, all day."

**Conway, Lawmakers Weigh In On White House Listening Session.** Presidential counselor Kellyanne Conway said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/22) that Wednesday's listening session at the White House "was an actual discussion and raw emotion but, also, a lot of very considered, deliberative discussion about solutions that many of these affected families and students, especially came ready to deliver to the President, to the Vice President, and really the world, as the President said the world was watching. And he takes very seriously everything that was said yesterday and presented to him." Conway added, "These are not easy solutions. But this is a necessary conversation and this is a President who doesn't just listen, he acts. So I predict on his watch things will change and people will feel like school safety and public safety are much enhanced because he is the President."

Rep. Jerrold Nadler said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/22), "Do I think the President or the Republicans were moved? I don't know. We'll find out. Actions speak louder than words. ... We know what to do. The only question is will we do it? I haven't seen the President or any of the Republicans really step up to the plate and evince a willingness to do anything meaningful. We know what we ought to do. We have to eliminate the loopholes in the background checks so you have to pass a background check wherever you buy a gun, not just from a licensed gun dealer. We have to ban assault weapons, ban large capacity magazines. Those are the important ones. Then there are a number of subsidiary ones. Better mental health, ban sales to people who can't fly, ban sales to people who commit domestic violence even if they're not married and so forth."

Rep. Joaquin Castro said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/22), "I thought it was very important for [Trump] to do that. I think it's good to that he listened to their stories and had a conversation with them about their experience and what they believe needs to be done. I think it's an important first step and we've even heard some promising statements from him about



bump stocks and background checks. That is some reporting into what the White House might be thinking . But remember all of that right now is just talk. It has to be turned into legislative action in the coming weeks and months and if that happens it will be a very positive thing for the White House and country."

Rep. Keith Ellison was asked on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/22) if anything the President proposed sounded reasonable to him. Ellison said, "Of course, it did, but, you know, this is not the first time the President said something that sounded reasonable and did the very opposite. He said he was going to protect Social Security. He's not. He said the tax cuts were for the middle class. They are for the rich. He's always saying stuff. If the President wants to get a little bit more credible, he needs to get behind these policies like raising the age for having an assault weapon, having background checks. If actually he puts his shoulder behind these things, he'll find people supporting him in Congress. ... The President says a lot of stuff. It's time for him to make his word and his deeds match together, and if he does that on the gun issue to save lives, he'll find me somebody who will vote in favor of those sensible policies."

***Eric Trump Says President's Listening Session "Was Amazing."*** Eric Trump was asked on [Fox News The Ingraham Angle](#) (2/22) about criticism of the note card the President held during Wednesday's listening session. Trump said, "If you read the points on the card, they were beautiful points. ... He was amazing yesterday. He was amazing yesterday and I was proud of him and quite frankly I think it was the first step in healing a nation that's deeply troubled by what's happened."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Parker, Rucker) says "the president, who has often struggled to convey empathy, clutched a slim notecard with reminders about how to communicate with the grieving...that officials said White House Communications Director Hope Hicks jotted down during a huddle with Trump to prepare for the event."

***Organizers Hope For 500,000-Strong Gun Control March On DC.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Moyer) reports that "organizers of a rally against mass shootings planned for next month in Washington are expecting up to 500,000 attendees, according to an event permit application." The application, which was "filed this week with the National Park Service," indicates "the 'March For Our Lives' will be March 24, although a location hasn't been determined." The Post adds that "the rally, organized by survivors of last week's school massacre in Parkland, Fla., will have 'sister marches' in other major cities, organizers said."

***Northeastern Governors Form Coalition Against Gun Violence.*** [USA Today](#) (2/22, Spector) reports "Democratic governors of Northeastern states announced Thursday they have formed a coalition to work collectively to fight gun violence." The governors of Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island "said they will sign a memorandum of understanding to develop ways the states can jointly address the scourge of illegal guns and develop shared law-enforcement efforts."

***NYTimes Analysis: Despite Polls, GOP "Minority Sentiment" Can Stop Gun Measures.*** In an analysis piece, the [New York Times](#) (2/22, Hulse) weighs why consistently strong poll numbers in favor of extending DACA and passing gun control are not leading to legislative success. To the Times, "the problem is that while those views might represent a majority of the nation and even a bipartisan majority of the House and Senate, they seem to be a minority sentiment among the Republicans who control Congress as well as the White House." The Times adds that "given that reality, backers of bipartisan compromise, energized by public support on those issues, can press their case and get to the edge of success but still not prevail."

***At Least Six State Teacher Pension Funds Own Gun Stocks.*** [Bloomberg News](#) (2/22, Weinberg, Mosendz) reports "teachers across Florida and at a high school where 17 people were shot dead on Feb. 14 pay into a retirement fund that invests in gun companies, it was revealed earlier this week." And "it turns out they're not alone," as "pension funds managed for public school teachers in at least a dozen US states, including New York and California, own stocks issued by the makers of firearms, including American Outdoor Brands Corp., the company previously known as Smith & Wesson that manufactured the semiautomatic AR-15 used in the attack at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School."

***Amnesty International Criticizes US Gun Violence.*** [Politico](#) (2/22, Castillo) reports that "as the debate over firearms and school shootings grows," Amnesty International "on Thursday criticized the US for failing to pass legislation and take other measures to prevent gun violence." The group's "annual [report](#), 'The State of the World's Human Rights,' gives five regional overviews and a survey of 159 countries and territories for 2017-18." The Report also criticizes "Trump's travel ban focusing on Muslim-majority nations; 'major attacks' on the rights of women and girls; the detention of terrorism suspects at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba; and the continuation of the death

penalty.”

**WPost Analysis: Lack Of School Shootings In Israel Due To Lack Of Privately-Owned Guns.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Eglash) reports from Jerusalem that “when students, parents and teachers pleaded with...Trump this week to act against school shootings, they cited Israel, a place where guns are a familiar sight but where school shootings are virtually unheard of.” However, Israeli “schools have escaped American-style violence in large part because of measures to confront Israel’s unique security challenge – and not because of efforts to deter troubled youths and lone madmen.” The Post adds that “Israeli security experts also say that gun violence is rare in Israel because privately held guns are so rare.”

### **Mueller Files Second Indictment Against Manafort, Gates.**

Special Counsel Robert Mueller filed a second indictment late Thursday against former Trump campaign officials Paul Manafort and Rick Gates. The 32-count [indictment](#), which charges Manafort and Gates with tax and bank fraud, is almost universally cast in media reports as an effort by Mueller to pressure both men to cooperate with his investigation.

The [Washington Times](#) (2/22, Mordock) says the new indictment “might ratchet up the heat” on both men to cooperate with Mueller’s investigation, and the [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Barrett, Hsu) says the new charges increase “the legal pressure on them as they prepare for a trial later this year.” The [New York Times](#) (2/22, Schmidt, Apuzzo) says the new charges “appear to be the latest attempt by” Mueller “to pressure Mr. Manafort and Mr. Gates to cooperate with his inquiry to avoid a lengthy prison sentence,” and the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/22, story 4, 0:25, Glor) said it “puts even more pressure on Manafort as the special counsel seeks his cooperation.”

Pierre Thomas said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/22, story 4, 1:50, Muir) that Gates “is under incredible pressure. Even before these new charges, he was facing up to 20 years in prison, and he has a very young family.” Jeffrey Toobin said on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (2/22), “It’s very simple. The message to Paul Manafort is, if you don’t want to die in prison, plead guilty and cooperate. To Rick Gates, if you ever want to see your children grow up, plead guilty and cooperate. ... If they are convicted, they are both looking at decades in prison. Paul Manafort is 70 years old. Rick Gates has young children. This is a complete squeeze play on both of them to put this case behind them and tell what they know about the Trump campaign.”

Former US Attorney Preet Bharara said on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (2/22) that Manafort “was a significant figure in the campaign for a substantial period of time. Even though people in the Trump White House like to discount him, like they do everyone who runs afoul of the law, or runs afoul of the boss, he could have information about dealings with other countries, he could have information about potential quid pro quos that went on. ... The sky is the limit with respect to how much Paul Manafort could have possibly known and so they’re doing everything they can, you know, as they like to say, turn the screws, to see if he’ll cooperate.”

[Politico](#) (2/22, Gerstein) that prosecutors “said the case against Manafort and Gates filed in Washington in October will continue, although it appears a few charges from that indictment are being moved to the Virginia case.” Because “defendants in tax cases have the right to insist on being charged in their home district,” Manafort “declined to agree to face those charges in Washington, according to a separate court filing prosecutors made public Thursday.” Politico says his decision “is yet another signal that his defense is playing legal hardball with the prosecution,” and adds that some lawyers “believe Manafort’s approach indicates he is hoping for a pardon from Trump.”

Rep. Joaquin Castro said on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#) (2/22), “I think Robert Mueller has Paul Manafort right where he wants him. Based on reporting, but also based on everything I’ve seen over the last year, it seems like Paul Manafort has been a shady character for quite some time. So there’s probably not only that, but other things that they can still go after. And I suspect that Robert Mueller is trying to get Paul Manafort to cooperate with him in this investigation. Because remember, Paul Manafort was the campaign manager of the Donald Trump campaign for a period of time, but also was involved with a lot of Russians and Ukrainians and I think would have a lot of information if he was willing to speak with the special prosecutor about the relationships that were involved between Trump campaign and the Russians. So I would expect more to come.”

**Hanson: Mueller Was Appointed To Investigate Crimes That Didn’t Exist.** Hoover Institution senior fellow Victor Davis Hanson writes in piece for [National Review](#) (2/22) that while “Mueller is under enormous pressure to find collusion between the Trump team and Russia, or to find that the Trump team obstructed justice by trying to hide such collusion,” neither “likely happened.” Mueller “was appointed to investigate crimes that did not exist. But if they did exist, collusion and

obstruction were committed by those associated with the Clinton campaign and even by members of the Obama administration." Hanson adds that "every time Mueller seeks to find incidental wrongdoing by those around Trump, he only makes the case stronger that behavior by those involved in the Clinton campaign and the Obama administration should be investigated."

### **Trump Calls Cabinet-Level Meeting To Discuss Biofuels Policy.**

[Reuters](#) (2/23, Renshaw) cites "three sources" who say the President "has called a cabinet-level meeting" for Tuesday "to discuss potential changes to biofuels policy, which is coming under increasing pressure after a Pennsylvania refiner blamed" the Renewable Fuels Standard "for its bankruptcy." The RFS "has created a lucrative market for corn-growing states, but refiners say it costs them hundreds of millions of dollars every year." Oil refiner Philadelphia Energy Solutions "declared bankruptcy last month and blamed the regulation for its demise."

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

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### **New York Times.**

*"Let The Teachers Teach."* In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/22) notes President Trump's support for arming certain teachers, and adds, "Thus did Mr. Trump parrot a tired shibboleth repeated once again on Thursday by...LaPierre." To the Times, "The best way to prevent the threat of a bad guy with a gun is to keep him from getting the sort of battlefield weapon the Parkland killer used, by banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and by tightening background checks."

*"Why Americans Could Believe The Worst From Russian Trolls."* A [New York Times](#) (2/22) editorial says that while Russian meddling in US politics "should not come as a surprise" and "President Trump's characteristically egocentric reaction, focusing exclusively on how it affects him, is likewise, sadly, in character," what "may be most disconcerting...is what it says about the state of democracy in the country that is supposed to be the model for the world." The Times concludes, "We have created the market and the mess, and the Russian troll factory, however mendacious, should be seen not as a cause, but as a loud warning that democracy as we know it, as we have celebrated it for so long, is in peril."

### **Washington Post.**

*"The Russians Are Coming. Republicans Need To Do Something About It."* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/22) says President Trump's "alarming unwillingness to respond to Russia's hostile influence campaign during the 2016 election and to counter its effort to interfere in this year's vote," means "Congress and the states must step in, and soon, to secure the midterms." The Times adds that "the Democratic minority has offered some good suggestions" and questions whether Republicans will "treat the issue with the same urgency."

*"A Death In An Iranian Prison Is One More Shocking Sign Of Repression."* A [Washington Post](#) (2/22) editorial writes that as "popular pressure on Iran's repressive regime has mounted in recent months, so has its brutal treatment of people accused of being agents of foreign powers — especially those with Western passports." Earlier this month, leading environmental activist and Canadian-Iranian dual national Kavous Seyed-Emami allegedly committed suicide in the notorious Evin prison. The same day, 81-year-old American citizen Baquer Namazi "was taken from the prison to a hospital, suffering from apparent cardiac problems, just five days after he was returned to his cell against the advice of doctors." The Post says the two men are "victims of a security apparatus that has struggled to tamp down unrest in scores of Iranian cities but finds it easy to target innocent men and women who happen to have some connection to the United States, Britain or other democratic states."

*"What Is Donald Trump Jr. Really Peddling In India?"* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/22) questions whether anyone would "pay a \$38,000 booking fee 'for a conversation and dinner'" to hear Donald Trump Jr. speak if he were not the President's son, and argues that this is the "conflict-of-interest problem at the center" of his trip to India. The Post questions asks whether he is "peddling...apartments with a view, or a back channel to the Oval Office?"

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*"Public Unions Vs. The First Amendment."* The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/22) says in an editorial that a case the Supreme Court will hear Monday about forced union fees gives the High Court an opportunity to reverse its 1977 *Abood* precedent that allowed governments to compel nonunion

public employees to pay “agency fees.” The Journal argues the change is overdue.

“*Putin Protects Assad Again.*” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/22) editorial urges the UN Security Council to approve the resolution creating a 30-day cease-fire in Eastern Ghouta.

“*Venezuela’s ‘Crypto’ Con.*” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/22) editorializes that the so-called cryptocurrency Venezuela launched this week is motivated by a desire to circumvent international financial sanctions. The Journal lists several reasons the Petro is actually a “crypto-con,” including that it more closely resembles an oil exchange-traded fund (ETF) backed by Venezuelan crude than a cryptocurrency, and that its underlying transactions can’t be verified. The Journal argues that President Nicolás Maduro’s announcement Wednesday that the country will launch a new currency backed by gold suggests the Petro is not succeeding in its targeted sales, but if it does, the international community should check Maduro before he can convert it into hard currency.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

#### *Wall Street Journal:*

[Trump’s Stance On Guns Pressures Congress](#)

[The Big Loophole That Helped Russia Exploit Facebook: Doctored Photos](#)

[What Bitcoin Rout? Sales Of New Digital Tokens Are Still Soaring](#)

[Pass-Through Businesses Rethink Their Status In Wake Of Tax Law](#)

#### *New York Times:*

[Trump Promotes Arming Teachers With Guns, But Rejects Active Shooter Drills](#)

[Mueller Files New Fraud Charges Against Paul Manafort And Rick Gates](#)

[Another Shooting, Another Gun Debate. Will The Outcome Be The Same?](#)

[As Gunman Rampaged Through Florida School, Armed Deputy ‘Never Went In’](#)

[A Supreme Court Showdown Could Shrink Unions’ Power](#)

[Iran Finally Let Her See Her Husband. He Was Dead.](#)

#### *Washington Post:*

[Trump Decided Early To Engage On The Gun Issue](#)

[Arming Teachers Is Now President’s Top Priority](#)

[A “Holocaust Law” Reopens Wounds From Poland’s Past](#)

[Oligarch, Kremlin In Touch Pre-Raid Russian Approval Led To Attack](#)

[Dreams Of Healing Others Are Slipping Out Of Reach](#)

[Manafort, Gates Hit With New Charges](#)

#### *Financial Times:*

[Rising Tide Of Debt To Hit Rich Countries’ Budgets, Warns OECD](#)

[Unilever HQ Decision Fraught With Risk And Complexity](#)

[Snapchat Creator Evan Spiegel’s Pay Hits \\$638M](#)

#### *Washington Times:*

[Columbine Effect: Mass Shooters Seek Fame, Vengeance By Emulating Teenage Killers](#)

[NRA Offers Free Help To Schools That Hire Armed Guards, Warns Of Overreach](#)

[Growing Body Of Research Rejects Transgender Movement](#)

[Former Soldier Who Killed Terrorism Suspect Seeks Trump Pardon As ‘Form Of Forgiveness’](#)

[Go OAR! Russian Fans Pulled Two Ways Over Dispiriting Games](#)

[Conservative Fury Against ‘Twitter Purge’ Turns To Action](#)

#### *Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:*

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting-WH; Florida School Shooting; School Attacks Foiled; Russia Probe; Severe Weather; Hospital Suicide; Syrian Civil War; Nursing Home Crime; Seattle Police Shooting; Missouri Governor Indicted; Top Vehicle Reviews; Winter Olympics-Womens Hockey.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-WH; Concealed Carry Teachers; Russia Probe; Missouri Governor Indicted; Syrian Civil War; Military-Air Exercise; CBS Program Change; Billy Graham Death; UK Royal Family Threatened; Winter Olympics-Womens Hockey.

**NBC:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-WH; Missouri Governor Indicted; Severe Weather; Net Neutrality Policy; SpaceX Launch; Winter Olympics-Womens Hockey; Winter

Olympics-Athlete Safety; Oprah-Trump; Toy Stores Closing; Winter Olympics-Skier.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida School Shooting – 25 minutes, 50 seconds

Missouri Governor Indicted – 2 minutes, 10 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting; NRA-Florida School Shooting; Missouri Governor Indicted; Wall Street News.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Missouri Governor Indicted; Death Sentence Moved; Winter Olympic News.

**FOX:** Florida School Shooting.

**NPR:** Florida School Shooting; Koch-Federal Judges; Missouri Governor Indicted; Puerto Rico Hurricane Damage.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

**White House:**

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Delivers remarks at the Conservative Political Action Conference; participates in a meeting with Prime Minister Turnbull; meets with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — Hosts a luncheon for members of the National Governors Association; participates in a meeting with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull of Australia.

**US Senate:** 2:00 PM Senate convenes for pro forma session Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

On recess until 26 February.

**US House:** 10:00 AM House of Representatives meets in pro forma session Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

On recess until 26 February.

**Other:** 9:00 AM POLITICO State Solutions Conference – POLITICO Eighth Annual State Solutions Conference, featuring conversations with governors on approaches their states have taken to address complex problems, with participants including Governors John Hickenlooper (Colorado), Ricardo Rossello (Puerto Rico), Rick Scott (Florida), Rick Snyder (Michigan), and Bill Walker (Alaska). Event also includes conversation with National Governors Association Executive Director and CEO Scott Patison on national priorities, on the sidelines of the NGA Winter Meeting Location: Microsoft Innovation & Policy Center, 901 K St NW, Washington, DC [www.politico.com](http://www.politico.com) <https://twitter.com/POLITICOLive>

10:00 AM Bipartisan governors unveil blueprint for healthcare at NPC – Ohio Governor John Kasich, Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, and Alaska Governor Bill Walker unveil a 'bipartisan blueprint for improving our nation's health system performance', via press conference at the National Press Club Location: National Press Club, 529 14th St NW, Washington, DC <https://twitter.com/JohnKasich>

4:00 PM WGR State Relations Task Force Annual Governors Reception – Women in Government Relations State Relations Task Force Annual Governors Reception, honoring the nation's 'top female leaders', Governors Kate Brown (Oregon), Mary Fallin (Oklahoma), Kay Ivey (Alabama), Susana Martinez (New Mexico), Gina Raimondo (Rhode Island), and Kim Reynolds (Iowa). Includes Special Award Recognition for California Governor Jerry Brown's Deputy Director Katie Wheeler Mathews Location: National Press Club, 529 14th St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.wgr.org> <https://twitter.com/WGRDC>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Did you see the town hall from the students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School where the students went face-to-face with Marco Rubio and that monster lady from the NRA? It was powerful. They had a chance to confront adults who have no problem with automatic weapons. It was fascinating because you could see how polished and fake these politicians are. It was especially obvious when a kid asked Senator Rubio a pretty simple question



that rebooted the senator right now into full-on Marco robot mode."

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Meanwhile, the President's daughter Ivanka Trump is heading to the closing of the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. And she is traveling with Sarah Huckabee Sanders, which would make a hilarious road trip movie."

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "Yesterday, Alexander Krushelnitzky, who won a bronze medal for curling, had his medal revoked because of doping violation. Only a dope would use steroids for curling. I mention it because it's interesting how they revoke the medal. Olympic officials took his medal, set it on the ice, and gently pushed it away."

**Stephen Colbert:** "Yesterday, President Trump held a listening session with traumatized students, teachers, and parents at the White House. It's a good place to start, but it was clearly a test of Trump's ability to listen, because he brought along a cheat sheet that included: 'I hear you.'"

**Stephen Colbert:** "Yes, arm the teachers! I'm sure it's in the budget. 'Sorry, your school can't afford enough copies of 'To Kill A Mockingbird,' but, good news, we're giving you something that can kill any bird.'"

**James Corden:** "[President Trump] tweeted today, 'I never said give teachers guns, what I said was to look at the possibility of giving concealed guns to gun-adept teachers with military or special training experience.' Has Trump ever met a teacher?"

**James Corden:** "A new report from the United Nations suggests that women around the world do 2.6 times the amount of unpaid household work that men do. And today they revealed that men do 2.6 times the amount of 'changing the subject.' ... A UN official said, 'If women stopped doing a lot of the work they do unpaid, then the whole economy would collapse.' But women say they do not want that to happen because then they would have to clean that up as well."

**Trevor Noah:** "After the tragedy in a school in Parkland, Florida, lawmakers have been under pressure to respond to the children and parents affected by yet another mass shooting. So last night, CNN rented an old WWE arena to host the town hall that brought together survivors with the elected officials. Off the bat, it was clear the survivors and families weren't there to play nice. ... And now, thanks to that father, we all know what Marco Rubio's face looks like when he's crapping his pants. That was basically how the town hall went all night. Marco Rubio got less love at this thing than a eunuch at an orgy."

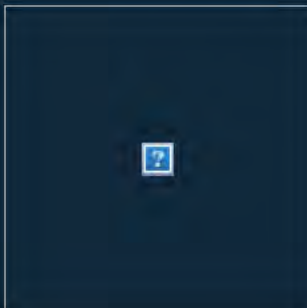
**Trevor Noah:** "So, awkward for Marco Rubio. He looked like a dad trying to explain to his son why he cheated on his mom. 'You know, Cameron, sometimes a politician has needs, and when the NRA opens their wallet, it's so hard to resist! One day you will understand.'"

**Trevor Noah:** "If you decide the teacher needs to be locked and loaded during English class, you're not trying to solve the problem – you're admitting defeat."

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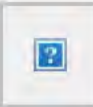


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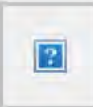
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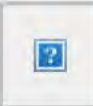
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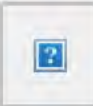
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24°F / 11°F  
-4°C / -12°C Snow Shower



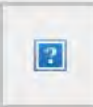
Sun  
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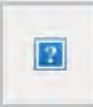
Mon  
25°F / 11°F  
-4°C / -12°C Snow Shower



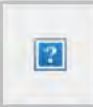
Tue  
22°F / 3°F  
-6°C / -16°C Partly Cloudy



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-11°C / -19°C Sunny



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






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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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## DOI In The News

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### U.S. Interior Panel Votes For Lower Federal Offshore Oil And Gas Royalties.

[Reuters](#) (2/28) reports that the Interior Department's Royal Policy Committee voted Wednesday to recommend to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke that the Department "lower royalty rates for federal offshore oil and gas drilling to 12.5 percent from 18.75 percent through 2024, to spur more production." In addition, the panel voted "to increase the amount of acreage available for offshore oil and natural gas leasing in the outer continental shelf." [The Hill](#) (2/28, Cama) reports the committee panel included "officials representing energy companies, state governments, tribes and Interior officials" and that the "lower rate would apply to the value of oil and gas from drilling-rights leases sold starting this year." Two top Democrats on Congressional committees overseeing the Interior Department, Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) and Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA), criticized the proposal and said, "This proposal would amount to a giveaway to some of the most profitable companies in the world and rob taxpayers of potentially billions of dollars of revenues over the life of the leases." [The Hill](#) (2/28, Green) reports Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) and Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) "sent a joint letter Tuesday night to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke" that raised "concerns over the Interior Department's expected decision Wednesday to lower royalty rates on oil drilled offshore." Cantwell and Grijalva believe "the rate drop would amount to a 'giveaway,' likening it to a 'fire sale.'" The two Democratic lawmakers also asked "Zinke to open up the RPC meetings to the public and allow for public comment." Additional coverage was provided by the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/28, Siegel).

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/28, Dlouhy) reports the recommendations of the 20-member panel "are seen as potentially helping make U.S. waters more competitive with other offshore hotspots around the world, including Mexico's portion of the Gulf of Mexico. Oil companies hunting for new crude discoveries in U.S. Gulf waters have been pushed into deeper depths, where ultra-high pressures strain the capacity of equipment, make wells harder to drill and increase costs." The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/28, Siegel) reports the proposed amount will be "the lowest rate the government can charge for offshore leases" and will be recommended to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke. Interior Department spokesperson Heather Swift said, "The department will not be making a decision on this today. ... We look forward to reviewing the committees recommendations after they have been formally received." Zinke appointed members of the committee "after former President Barack Obama let it lapse during his second term."

### National Park Service: Most Popular Park Sites For 2017.

[CNN](#) (2/28, Hetter) reports that "nearly 331 million people visited the National Park Service's 417 sites around the United States in 2017, a slight dip from the 331 million record-breaking visits during its centennial anniversary year in 2016." NPS officials "expected the slight decline after the



centennial celebrations during the previous year.” However, the article notes, “while attendance numbers remained relatively stable, people actually spent more time in the parks in 2017 – more than 1.4 billion hours last year, an increase of 19 million hours over 2016.” Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, in a statement, “Our National Parks are being loved to death. As visitor rates continue at a high level, we must prioritize much-needed deferred maintenance including aging facilities, roads and other critical infrastructure. President Trump’s proposal to establish a Public Lands Infrastructure Fund is a step in the right direction. This is not a Republican or Democrat issue, this is an American issue, and the President and I remain ready to work with anyone in Congress who is willing to get the job done.”

***Zion National Park Ranks 3rd In U.S. For Number Of Visitors.*** [USA Today](#) (2/28, Demille) reports that Zion National Park “ranks as the third busiest in the U.S. after another record-breaking year for visitation in 2017.” The park “drew 4.5 million, according to National Park Service figures released Wednesday.” The article notes that “only Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee, with 11.3 million visitors, and the Grand Canyon National Park, at 6.3 million, drew more.”

***Joshua Tree National Park Seeing Surge In Popularity.*** The [AP](#) (2/28) reports that Joshua Tree National Park is “seeing an explosion in popularity.” The park welcomed “more than 2.8 million visitors in 2017.” Park spokesman George Land “says reasons for the surge included a substantial wildflower bloom, an unusually warm period from Thanksgiving through New Year’s, and growing popularity among foreign tourists.”

### **Report On Fight Against Invasive Mussels Released.**

The [Sunnyside \(WA\) Daily Sun-News](#) (2/28) reports that the Interior Department on Wednesday “released a report highlighting the progress made in the fight against invasive zebra and quagga mussels, which can impair the delivery of water and power, diminish boating and fishing and devastate ecosystem health.” The report arrives after Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke “announced in June a set of initiatives to protect western ecosystems and hydroelectric facilities from the destructive species through continued collaboration with western governors as well as federal, state, and tribal agencies.” Zinke said, “I am pleased to share progress made on honoring those commitments. There is more work to do, and Interior is committed to continuing our efforts. With the busy boating season approaching, it is imperative that we are vigilant in taking measures to prevent the spread of invasive mussels and other aquatic invasive species.”

The [Boulder City \(NV\) Review](#) (2/28) reports that the Interior Department “spent \$8.6 million nationwide in fiscal year 2017 to address the issue.” The department is “working on more than four dozen actions to address invasive mussels including preventing the spread of the species to uninfested waters, and containing and controlling them where they are established, such as in Lake Powell and the Lower Colorado River region.”

### **Ex-Interior Officials: Zinke’s Proposed Overhaul Unnecessary.**

The [AP](#) (2/28, Elliott) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s reorganization plan “to put more of his department’s decision-makers in the field has a fundamental flaw in the eyes of some who spent their careers making those decisions: They’re already out there.” According to the article, “eleven former Interior Department officials with decades of experience in both Washington and in local offices told The Associated Press the agency already has a well-established system for decentralized decision-making.” Scott Florence, who retired after 38 years with the Bureau of Land Management, said, “Ninety percent-plus of the decisions that get made get made at the local level.” The issue, “some said, is that over the past few years, an increasing number of decisions that should have been made locally were ultimately decided in Washington because of political pressure, under both Democratic and Republican administrations.” Additionally, “since 91.5 percent of the department’s workforce of about 70,000 is already based outside the Washington area, most of the former interior employees said they doubted pushing more employees out of Washington would improve things.”

Additional coverage of the reorganization plan was provided by [KBSC-FM](#) Boise, ID (2/28, Barnhill).

### **Ryan Zinke’s Special Assistant Resigns Over Anti-Muslim Views Shared On Social Media.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/28, Siciliano) reports that Christine Bauserman, a special assistant to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, has resigned after “a media report showed several instances when she made inflammatory comments on social media.” Bauserman’s resignation came “after a CNN KFile review showed that she posted remarks on Facebook and Twitter that espoused

conspiracy theories, anti-Muslim and anti-LGBT views.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Fears) quotes a statement from an Interior spokeswoman which said, “The positions expressed by Ms. Bauserman are inappropriate and unacceptable, and they are not consistent with those of the Secretary or the Trump Administration. ... The department has accepted Ms. Bauserman’s letter of resignation.”

Also reporting are [CNN](#) (2/28, Kaczynski, Massie), [The Hill](#) (2/28, Carter), and the [Arizona Daily Independent](#) (2/28, Hunnicutt).

### **Trump Wades Deeper Into Biofuel Debate With Second Meeting.**

[Reuters](#) (3/1, Renshaw) reports that President Trump on Thursday will “gather rivals from the oil and corn industries for the second time this week as the administration seeks elusive common ground on reforms to the nation’s controversial biofuels law.” According the article, “the meetings come amid rising concern in the White House over the current state of the U.S. Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), a law requiring refiners to mix biofuels such as corn-based ethanol into their fuel, which has increasingly divided two of Trump’s most important constituencies.” Trump will be “joined by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency head Scott Pruitt and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who will be sitting in for U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue as he attends events in California,” according to sources.

### **Trump’s Mining Giveaway.**

[Politico](#) (2/28, Vinik, Michael) reports that President Trump’s decision to shrink two national monuments in Utah will “give a huge windfall to miners.” Due to the General Mining Act of 1872, “miners will be able to extract resources from the 1.84 million acres of land for just a few hundred dollars, reaping huge profits on land owned by the federal government.” The article says that “this subsidy already costs Washington hundreds of millions of dollars annually – and without any legislative changes, Trump just made it even larger.”

### **House Democrats Request Subpoena Over Interior’s Senior Executive Reassignments.**

[Government Executive](#) (2/28, Katz) reports that Rep. Elijah Cummings, the ranking member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, “requested a subpoena of documents related to the reassignment of dozens of senior executives at the Interior Department, saying the Trump administration has so far stymied efforts to bring transparency to the decisions.” Interior “sent 176 pages of documents...in response to a request he made in October.” According to the article, “more than one-third of that was a photocopied version of the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act, however, and Cummings said the rest was heavily redacted and failed to shine light on all of his questions.” Cummings wrote his letter to Rep. Trey Gowdy, asking “Gowdy specifically to compel the department to provide unredacted documents and said the request falls ‘squarely within our jurisdiction.’”

### **Zinke May Have Pulled Official From Firefighting Duty For Tour.**

[MSNBC](#) (2/28) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke “may have pulled firefighting personnel for his helicopter tour last summer in which he did not visit any fire zones.”

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Feds Approve Uranium Mine Expansions In Utah’s San Juan County, One Of Them Near Bears Ears.**

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/28) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has “issued final approvals for two uranium mine expansions in southeast Utah, including one on the backdoor of what used to be Bears Ears National Monument.” According to the article, “in decisions signed last week, the BLM’s Utah state director Ed Roberson approved the expansions, but with several conditions.” Additional coverage was provided by the [Denver Business Journal](#) (2/28, Miller).

### **BLM Offers Tours To See Greater Sage-Grouse In Eastern Oregon.**

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (2/28, Stephen) reports that the Bureau of Land Management is offering a series of tours to observe greater sage-grouse breed. The tours on March 10 and April 7 will be limited to 20 people per tour.

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **For Many Republicans, Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan And Beaches Don't Mix.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Fears) reports that several South Carolina Republican legislators have broken "sharply with the president over his plan to offer oil and gas companies leases to drill a few miles off beaches that bring \$20 billion in annual revenue to South Carolina and support 600,000 tourism jobs." At Interior Department public "listening sessions" to "explain its proposed five-year lease plan – which would open 95 percent of the nation's outer continental shelf to potential drilling – a growing chorus of bipartisan opposition is finding its voice." The Post says the first wave of opposition came from "Atlantic and Pacific coast governors, congressional delegations and attorneys general," and now "state lawmakers, mayors and city councils are mobilizing in an attempt to stop the administration's plan." According to the Post, "Mark Harmon, the director of a state unit of the American Petroleum Institute, stressed a different point. 'Ultimately it means the potential for jobs and reinvestment in the community,' he said."

### **Don't Expect Oil Drilling Off Jersey Shore, Trump Official Tells N.J. Republicans.**

[NJ News](#) (2/27, Salant) reports that after meeting with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke at the U.S. Capitol on Tuesday, Republican lawmakers from New Jersey were optimistic that the Jersey Shore would be excluded from offshore drilling. Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) said, "If it's not off the table, it will soon be off the table." Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ) observed that Zinke acknowledged "the area off the coast of New Jersey met none of the criteria for opening the area to oil drilling," as it lacked reserves and onshore infrastructure. LoBiondo also cited "unanimous bipartisan opposition." Rep. Tom MacArthur (R-NJ) said, "It's crystal clear to the secretary that we don't want offshore drilling and he's going to have a fight on his hands if he tries to push it."

### **Cape Officials Join In Condemning Trump Drilling Proposal.**

The [Cape Cod \(MA\) Times](#) (2/26, Fraser) reports Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA) hosted a gathering at the New England Aquarium on Monday "to condemn a proposal to reopen the ocean off New England to oil and gas exploration, and possibly drilling." Markey's gathering comes before the BOEM is scheduled to hold a public hearing Tuesday on the federal proposal. Markey said, "Unfortunately this public meeting (today) is nothing more than a sham in the Trump style – all show, no substance. ... I will exhaust all legislative tools to fight this." Opponents of the plan are preparing to stage "an anti-drilling rally" before the BOEM meeting. Brewster resident Christopher Powicki said, "We want them to know the opposition to this is deep, wide, and is going to be persistent."

### **Bipartisan Rally Against Offshore Drilling In Ocean City.**

The [Ocean City \(NJ\) Patch](#) (2/27, Bellano) reports a bipartisan group of New Jersey politicians gathered "against the backdrop of one of the Earth's most powerful natural resources" outside the Ocean City Music Pier to express their opposition to the Trump administration's proposed offshore drilling plan "and encourage the public to do the same." Ocean City Mayor Jay Gillian said the location was selected to serve as a reminder of what would be at risk in the event of an oil spill. Additional coverage was provided by [WHYY-TV](#) Philadelphia (2/26, MacDonald).

### **Hundreds Turn Out For Federal Meeting On Offshore Energy Development.**

The [North State Journal \(NC\)](#) (2/28, King) reports the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management met Monday in North Carolina "to talk about a proposal allowing leases to develop oil and gas reserves in the 7.2 million acres off of N.C.'s coastline in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS)," which the State Journal says are "currently off-limits in the five-year leasing plan that expired in 2017." According to the article, if North Carolina is included in the next five-year leasing plan, "it is estimated to mean 55,000 jobs for the state and \$4 billion to the state economy by 2035."

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## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

### **Sacramento County Sues State Alleging Secret Meetings On Delta Tunnels.**

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/28, Kasler) reports that Sacramento County is spearheading "a lawsuit accusing state officials of holding illegal secret meetings about the controversial Delta tunnels project." The county, "joined by the city of Stockton, several Delta water agencies and a group of environmental organizations, sued the State Water Resources Control Board on Tuesday." The suit alleges "officials with the state water board met privately and illegally as far

back as 2015 with representatives of the California Department of Water Resources and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the lead agencies planning the tunnels." In the suit, Sacramento County and the other plaintiffs claims the secret meetings provide evidence of "deliberate obstruction, and possible collusion."

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Lawsuit Asks For Greater Protections For Rare Northwest Bird.**

[Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) (2/28, Burns) reports that "an environmental group is suing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to increase protections for a small ground-nesting bird called the streaked horned lark." The Center for Biological Diversity is "suing to raise the bird's status to 'endangered.'" The group is also "trying to get rid of an exemption for farmers and airports that threaten the lark's nesting habitat."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/28) and [KUOW-FM](#) Seattle (2/28, Burns).

### **Fire Crews Burn 84 Acres Of Refuge To Help Longleaf Pine.**

The [AP](#) (3/1) reports that "fire crews have burned a small section of a wildlife refuge to benefit longleaf pine trees, which require periodic fires to thrive, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said." According to the article, "most of the 38,500-acre Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Reserve is in Louisiana and its headquarters is in Slidell, but Wednesday's burn was in Pearl River County, Mississippi." Assistant Fire Management Officer Chris LeRouge "says the refuge hopes to conduct about two more prescribed burns before turkey nesting season begins in mid-March or April."

## **National Park Service**

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### **Cherry Blossom Peak Bloom Dates To Be Announced Thursday.**

[WRC-TV](#) Washington (2/28, Jones) reports that the National Park Service will "announce peak bloom dates for Washington's cherry blossoms Thursday." According to the article, "last year's peak bloom was predicted to happen between March 14 through March 17, but a cold snap damaged some of the blossoms and pushed peak bloom back five days." Currently, "the Yoshino cherry trees are in the first of six stages that culminate in peak bloom."

### **Park Service Releases Concepts For Sperry Chalet Restoration.**

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/28, Byron) reports that "four concepts released to the public Wednesday for restoring Glacier National Park's famed Sperry Chalet dormitory range from stabilizing the walls but not rebuilding the structure – instead, setting up temporary yurts or wall tents for visitors — to reconstructing the dorm to as 'close to as it was' with some critical building code updates." Other options being considered are "to restore the dormitory 'in place, but modernized,' or moving the building's location so it's beyond recent avalanche activity." Lauren Alley, a spokesperson for the national park, "said the options are consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act, which requires the federal agency to assess a variety of effects for proposed actions before making decisions."

### **Opposition Grows To Plans For I-80 Fence In Knowlton.**

The [New Jersey Herald](#) (2/28, Scruton) reports that "a fast-expanding circle of citizens, governing bodies, elected officials and conservation-minded groups is becoming involved in efforts to stop or severely alter the state Department of Transportation's plan to build a wall along a section of the Interstate 80 that runs through the Delaware Water Gap." The purpose of the wall is "to keep rocks and boulders from falling from the cliffs of Mount Tammany onto the highway that runs between the base of the mountain and the Delaware River, which carved the gap." Additional coverage was provided by [NJ News](#) (2/28, Ionno).

### **Grand Canyon Ready To Celebrate 100 Years Of National Park Status.**

The [Kingman \(AZ\) Daily Miner](#) (2/28) reports that the Grand Canyon "celebrates its centennial anniversary next year and the National Park Service is marking the event with a new logo for 2019." The logo, "unveiled Monday by the National Park Service and Grand Canyon Association, depicts the Grand Canyon and one of its most significant geographical elements, the Colorado River, accompanied by the tagline, 'Go Grand.'" To promote Grand Canyon visitation during the

Centennial, the NPS will “hold events throughout the year at the South Rim, North Rim, Desert View, Inner Canyon and surrounding gateway communities.”

### **New Superintendent For John Day Fossil Beds.**

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (3/1) reports that “the National Park Service has selected Patrick Gamman as the new superintendent John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, the agency announced Wednesday.” Gamman will “replace Shelly Hall, who retired in August. He is expected to begin his work at the national monument in Eastern Oregon in late spring.”

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Governor Invites Senator Murkowski To Visit NMI.**

[Marianas Variety](#) (3/1) reports that Gov. Ralph D.L.G. Torres last week sent a letter to Sen. Lisa Murkowski, “inviting her and the members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to visit the Northern Mariana Islands for an in-depth experience of the CNMI’s economic resurgence and its goal of retaining its economic viability.” The invitation arrives “on the heels of the recent Senate committee hearing on S. 2325, the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act.” Since the hearing, Torres has “reached out to members of both the House and the Senate and has remained in discussions with them as the legislation moves through Congress.”

### **American Samoa Seeks Major Federal Disaster Assistance.**

[Radio New Zealand](#) (2/27) reports that American Samoa is seeking a declaration that “would pave the way for more federal aide in the wake of Cyclone Gita.” The cyclone has “caused nearly \$US7 million worth of damage to American Samoa’s government buildings and other infrastructure.” The request was signed and sent on February 25.

### **Local Students Debate Politics And Meet Influential Leaders At Junior Statesmen Winter Congress Convention.**

The [Virgin Islands Consortium \(VIR\)](#) (2/27) reports that “a delegation of eight Virgin Islands high school students recently attended the Junior State of America’s (JSA) ‘MidSoHio’ (Midwest, Southeast & Ohio River Valley) Winter Congress Convention in Washington, DC, and brought home one of the coveted Best Speaker Gavels, a release issued late Monday.” The students “spent five days in the nation’s capital, where they debated dozens of student-drafted bills during a mock-legislative session, visited cultural landmarks, and met with influential leaders including Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett, Congressman and Civil Rights pioneer John Lewis, and Douglas Domenech, assistant secretary for Insular Areas at the Department of the Interior.” On February 16th, the group visited the Interior Department and “met with the leaders of the Office of Insular Affairs, including Assistant Secretary Douglas Domenech, Policy Director Basil Ottley, and Technical Assistance Director Charlene Leizear.”

### **Chicken Of The Sea Partners With Pacifical On MSC Certified Tuna.**

[Benzinga](#) (2/27) reports that Chicken of the Sea has signed an agreement with Pacifical “to promote MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certified tuna sourced from the eight-member nations of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) in the Western Central Pacific Ocean.”

### **Manoa: UH Law School Offers Legal Training To Pacific Island Judges.**

The [University of Hawaii System](#) (2/27) announces that “the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai’i at Manoa will offer legal training for another two years through a contract that brings judicial education to jurists throughout the Pacific, and also hosts them in Honolulu for intensive week-long sessions.” The program is “part of the Pacific Islands Legal Institute administered by the Ninth Circuit Pacific Islands Committee, with funding provided by the U.S. Department of the Interior.”

## **Office Of Surface Mining**

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### **Nearly \$55.7M For PA To Reclaim Abandoned Coal Mines.**

The [Wilkes-Barre \(PA\) Times Leader](#) (2/28, O’Boyle) reports that the Office of Surface Mining

Reclamation and Enforcement has "announced the availability of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Reclamation grants, which will provide \$55,657,898 million to Pennsylvania to reclaim abandoned coal mines." Rep. Lou Barletta "said funding for the reclamation of abandoned mine lands is a critical component in revitalizing Pennsylvania's coal communities." Barletta said, "I look forward to seeing the tangible ways in which this money will improve our land and water resources and drive economic development across the state."

### **\$2.8 Million Grant To Fund Abandoned Coal Mine Cleanup In Eastern Oklahoma.**

The [Oklahoman](#) (2/28, Wilmoth) reports that "a \$2.8 million federal grant will allow state officials to continue their efforts to clean up abandoned coal mines in eastern Oklahoma." The article

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **USGS Study Finds New Frack Sand Source In River Sediment.**

[E&P Magazine](#) (2/28) reports that "sediment from the Missouri River Basin can be as used a fracking proppant, or frack sand, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) said in a statement on Feb. 27." Ron Zelt, a USGS scientist and the lead author of the study, said, "Information from the new study could shift how deposited reservoir sediment is mitigated, and how recovered sediments potentially could be viable to various industries." Additional coverage was provided by [Oil and Gas Investor](#) (2/28).

### **Regulators Tighten Rules To Control Fracking-related Earthquakes In Central, Northwest And South-central Oklahoma.**

The [Oklahoman](#) (2/28, Money) reports geologists and regulators in Oklahoma "said they are on solid footing with revised rules they issued Tuesday to control fracking-related earthquakes in central, northwest and south-central Oklahoma." The new standards, "issued by the Oklahoma Corporation Commission's Oil and Gas Conservation Division and the Oklahoma Geological Survey, requires oil and gas well operators hydraulically fracturing a well to more quickly act to limit earthquakes associated with the process."

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/28, Wethe) reports the OCC "announced that all explorers within certain areas must use equipment known as a seismic array, which detects movement underground." In addition, the regulators "lowered the quake threshold for pausing work from 3.0 magnitude to 2.5, a level where humans can feel the earth move."

[UPI](#) (2/28, Graeber) reports the U.S. Geological Survey on Wednesday "recorded a 2.9-magnitude quake in Fairview, an area prone to heightened seismicity." [KGOU-FM](#) Norman, OK (2/28, Wertz) and [E&E Publishing](#) (2/28) also provide coverage of the new protocols.

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Willapa Bay Wetlands OK With Higher Seas.* [Chinook \(WA\) Observer](#) (2/28, Burns).
- *Hawaii Dumped 1.5 Billion Gallons Of Lava Into Pacific As Volcano Wall Collapses.* [Forbes](#) (2/28, Nace).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Energy Interests Dominate Interior Department's Royalty Policy Committee.**

In an op-ed for [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/28, Alexander), Taxpayers for Common Sense President Ryan Alexander says the Interior Department's Royalty Policy Committee is "well-represented with energy interests ready to profit from the committee's recommendations" and lacks "any independent taxpayer voice." The Committee has, so far, neglected to review royalty and leasing policies that continue "to cost taxpayers billions of dollars in lost revenue;" and without "some dramatic changes, the Royalty Policy Committee could just be an echo chamber for the Trump administration's agenda to fast-track leasing, decrease royalties and favor industry over federal taxpayers." Alexander calls on the Royalty Policy Committee "to turn the process around" and remember its "fiduciary duty to the American taxpayer," before it becomes "a case study in crony capitalism."

### **Depending On China And Russia For Key Minerals Could Lead To A National Security Crisis.**

Jeff A. Green, president and founder of J.A. Green & Company, a bipartisan government relations firm based in Washington, DC, writes in a piece for [The Hill](#) (2/28) that the Trump Administration understands that one of China's "primary trade weapons" is its "near-monopoly over several minerals and materials that the United States military relies on to maintain its technological edge." He says that in "recognition of such high stakes, the administration has made producing and manufacturing domestic supplies of minerals a national security priority over the past year." The Administration has done so by issuing three executive orders meant to maximize the government's use of materials produced in the US, identify weaknesses in domestic supply chains, and reduce reliance on foreign sources for critical minerals.

### **Busting The Top Five Myths About Offshore Energy.**

In an op-ed for the [Daily Caller](#) (2/28, Green), API's Energy Tomorrow Blog Editor Mark Green debunks the "top five myths about offshore energy" and says "oversight of state and federal officials have made offshore development safer than it has ever been – and continuously becoming safer because technologies are ever-improving." In response to the myth that offshore development risks spoiling coastal areas, Green cites comments made by Shell officials last year to US federal officials. According to Green, Shell pointed out that approximately 65,000 wells have been drilled in the Gulf of Mexico since World War II and "[a]ll the while, our industry has co-existed with commercial and recreational fishing, military restricted zones, tourism, recreational activities, and even in the proximity of marine protected areas, including the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary." Other myths debunked by Green include: offshore development is high-risk, offshore development is opposed by the military, energy from offshore sources is not needed, and offshore survey efforts hurt marine animals.

### **Why Fossil Fuels Survive.**

Robert Samuelson writes in the [Washington Post](#) (2/28) that the "real obstacle" to dealing with climate change is "our vast dependence on fossil fuels and the difficulty of extricating ourselves without crippling the world economy." While the Trump Administration "has withdrawn from the Paris climate agreement, making any transition harder," the problems "transcend President Trump's disengagement, as a new study from the oil giant BP makes clear." The study projects that "total use of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas and coal)" will "increase almost 20 percent between 2016 and 2040. The electric cars, renewables and fuel switching merely offset some – but not all – of the added energy demand from population and economic growth."

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Help For Martin County – And The Rest Of Kentucky.* [Ashland \(KY\) Daily Independent](#) (2/28).
- *How To Protect National Monuments From Trump.* [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/28, Frank).
- *Did The Clintons Finagle A Twofer, Including A Land-grab?* [Washington Examiner](#) (3/1, Pendley).
- *OPINION: Trump Administration Granting Big Oil Its Wildest Dreams?* [Pagosa \(CO\) Daily Post](#) (2/28, Weiss).
- *Our View: Government Must Listen On Ocean Drilling.* [Gloucester \(MA\) Times](#) (2/28).

## **Top National News**

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### **Media Analyses: Trump Stands Up To NRA, Appears To Embrace Gun Restrictions.**

To cautiously favorable and at times stunned media coverage, the President yesterday appeared to support legislation opposed by the NRA and GOP leaders. His comments came at a televised White House meeting with 17 lawmakers. As the [New York Times](#) (2/28, Shear) reports, Trump "appeared to stun giddy Democrats and stone-faced Republicans by calling for comprehensive gun control that would expand background checks, keep guns from the mentally ill, secure schools and restrict gun sales from some young adults." Trump "repeatedly suggested that the dynamics had changed, in part because of his leadership in the White House, a sentiment that the Democrats in the room readily agreed with as they saw the president supporting their ideas." [Roll Call](#) (2/28, McKinless) reports Trump "told lawmakers if they combine their various gun-related measures into a bill in the ballpark of the ideas he endorsed on Wednesday, he 'will sign it.'"

□ [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/28, story 2, 2:35, Holt) said Trump "stood up to the" NRA and "appeared to embrace new gun restrictions," while the □ [CBS Evening News](#) (2/28, story 2, 2:35,



Cordes) led its segment on the meeting with footage of Trump saying, "I'm not into popularity. I'm into getting something done that's good." CBS reported the President "scrambled the partisan divide on guns...siding with Democrats on dramatically expanding background checks and raising the purchasing age for semi-automatic weapons." Trump was also shown saying, "It doesn't make sense that I have to wait until I'm 21 to get handgun, but I can get this weapon at 18."

□ [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/28, story 2, 4:35, Karl), which described Republicans as "livid" at Trump, reported that "the most pro-NRA president in history gathered together a group including some of Congress's most forceful advocates of gun control." ABC showed the President saying, "I see some folks that don't say nice things about me. That's okay. Because if you turn that into this energy, I'll love you. I don't care." Trump, added ABC, "repeatedly took positions that put himself at odds with the NRA and Republican leaders in Congress." In fact, [Reuters](#) (2/28, Rascoe, Rampton) reports, Trump "said he told NRA officials, 'It's time. We've got to stop this nonsense. It's time.'"

Amy Walter of the Cook Political Report said on □ [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/28), "I think a lot of people, when the President was first elected and when he was inaugurated, thought that this was going to happen actually more often – a candidate who sold himself as this negotiator, a guy who was going to do politics differently, that he was going to create these new and different kinds of alliances. This isn't actually that surprising for people outside of Washington because that is the Donald Trump they saw as candidate. I think it's a good thing for him to do as President because it puts it back on the issue here of a President who is not a traditional politician, is going to talk like a regular person."

Tom Bevan of Real Clear Politics said on □ [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/28) that Trump "has got goodwill with the base on some of the issues and on some aspects of the gun issue. The question is how far is he going to go and how much and how strong is he going to lead on this issue? We are going into primary season. ... It's an election year. It's not the best time for compromise to be had on the gun issue. So, it will depend on how much Trump is willing to push on this issue and lead."

[Politico](#) (2/28, Alexander) recounts that "Rep. Steve Scalise (R-La.), the House majority whip, spoke up during a White House meeting in favor of a House Republican plan that combines a background-check measure with a provision that would make concealed-carry permits valid across state lines." Trump, however, "dismissed the idea, saying 'it'll never pass.'" The [AP](#) (2/28, Mascaro, Daly) quotes Trump as saying during the meeting, "We can't wait and play games and nothing gets done. ... We want to stop the problems." To [Politico](#) (2/28, Lima), "Trump took a hammer to Republicans' usual talking points Wednesday." Matt Vespa, writing for [Townhall](#) (2/28), called the meeting "a total disaster" and "pretty much was a capitulation to pro-gun control Democrats."

More cautious is the analysis in the [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Debonis, Kim), which saw the meeting as "reminiscent of a bipartisan White House meeting Trump convened in January on immigration, in which the unpredictable president promised to sign any compromise solution Congress could craft, only to reject the outcome days later. Behind the scenes, administration officials had sabotaged a bipartisan bill that inevitably collapsed." The Post also says Trump "sent so many mixed signals about what he envisioned for a package on firearms and school safety that he left Democrats gleeful and Republicans tight-lipped amid doubts that Congress would produce any legislation."

[Breitbart](#) (2/28, Hawkins) reports Trump "spoke of...using the Manchin-Toomey bill 'as a base' to which other gun bills can be added, and then continued taking comments from various senators and representatives in attendance." The [Washington Times](#) (2/28, Boyer) further reports that "in a surprise, Mr. Trump expressed support for reviving a Senate bill that former President Obama sought in 2013 to expand background checks to all gun sales." The Manchin-Toomey bill "failed to pass the Senate five years ago, receiving 54 votes instead of the needed 60," but the President "expressed interest in using Manchin-Toomey as a base for an overall bill, and asked if the lawmakers would considering adding a provision to raise the legal age limit from 18 to 21 for purchasing certain long guns." The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (2/28, Mauriello) reports that when Sen. Pat Toomey "confirmed that the legislation he wrote with US Sen. Joe Manchin...doesn't address that," Trump retorted, "You know why? Because you're afraid of the NRA. ... I can say the NRA is opposed to it. ... These are great patriots. They love our country, but that doesn't mean we have to agree on it."

Trump, the [Dallas Morning News](#) (2/28, Gillman) reports, also "gave full-throated support Wednesday to Sen. John Cornyn's bill to beef up federal gun buyer background checks," and he also "called for confiscating guns from people who are mentally ill." Said Trump, "I don't want

mentally ill people to be having guns. ... Take the guns first, go through due process second." The Morning News adds that after taking "a startling stance," Trump "reiterated it," saying, "Take the firearms first and then go to court." To [USA Today](#) (2/28, Jackson, Shesgreen, Gaudiano), it was just "one of many startling comments" Trump "made in a rambling White House meeting designed to hash out school safety legislation."

Trump, reports the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/28, Feldscher), made those remarks in response to "Vice President Mike Pence's statement that no one's rights should be trampled in gun control legislation." [The Hill](#) (2/28, Samuels) quoted Pence as saying, "Allow due process so no one's rights are trampled, but the ability to go to court, obtain an order and then collect not only the firearms but any weapons." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28, Radnofsky, Peterson) runs a similar account of the session.

Moreover, [McClatchy](#) (2/28, Hill) reports, Trump reiterated "he will write an executive order banning bump stocks."

The President later took to [Twitter](#) and wrote, "It was an honor to welcome bipartisan members of Congress for a discussion on SAFE schools and SAFE communities. As we continue to mourn the loss of so many precious young lives in Parkland, we are determined to turn our grief into action."

Sen. Amy Klobuchar said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/28), "It felt like something of a real discussion and that was important. Secondly, the President clearly committed to a strong background check bill, a strong universal background check bill. He said he didn't want a weak bill. It's clear he wanted to close the gun show loophole, that he wanted to do something about background checks. Of course, many of my colleagues that have been through the immigration debate in the last few weeks have seen him say one thing and the next day say another. So, we have to hold him to this, because the American people are very focused on this now, young people going to march in the streets, and if we do nothing after he has said this, I don't think that's going to work very well for him."

***Cuomo Criticizes Congressional Democrats As Too Timid On Gun Control Issue.*** [POLITICO New York](#) (2/28, Vielkind) reports "Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo faulted members of his own party Wednesday for not advancing tougher gun control legislation." Cuomo, "who is positioning himself for a potential 2020 presidential bid, told New York-based reporters on an unrelated morning conference call that New York's gun control laws are already very strict, and that federal action is needed to prevent mass shootings like the recent tragedy in South Florida." Said Cuomo, "I'd like to see the national Democrats put a real gun bill on the table: full background checks, no loopholes, mental health database and ban assault weapons. ... I understand why the White House won't do it, I don't understand why the national Democrats don't do it."

***Florida Polls Finds Support For Assault-Weapons Ban, Opposition To Arming Teachers.*** The [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (2/28, Man) reports "the latest poll of Florida voters, released Wednesday, shows a broad consensus in favor of stricter gun laws, including a ban on assault weapons, and opposition to arming teachers." In effect, the poll "found some of what most Florida voters want [is] the opposite of what the Florida Legislature is working on."

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/28, Vassolo, Smiley) reports a Quinnipiac survey "found that 62 percent of voters favor a ban on assault weapons, and about two-thirds support 'stricter gun laws,' like universal background checks or a ban on the sale of high-capacity ammunition magazines, while 56 percent oppose arming faculty members." Those "results closely mirror those from a separate poll conducted by Florida Atlantic University's Business and Economic Polling Initiative and also released Wednesday." That poll found "nearly 70 percent of people in the state want to see a ban on the sale of assault-style weapons and support stricter gun laws." The FAU survey, says [Politico](#) (2/28, Caputo), also found "56 percent of voters opposed arming teachers."

In an editorial, the [Tampa \(FL\) Tribune](#) (2/28) argues "Florida parents should not send their kids to school wondering whether the math teacher, the kindergarten teacher or the football coach secretly carries a gun," and "yet the Florida Legislature appears poised to approve a risky scheme that envisions 10 armed teachers in every school who are prepared to respond to a mass shooter." To the Tribune, "many students who embrace teachers as mentors and role models would eye all of them with new suspicion, since which teachers had guns would be secret." Moreover, "minority students who already are disciplined disproportionately and often coached by parents to be cautious around police would be particularly affected."

***Morning Consult/Politico National Poll Finds Public Supports Arming Teachers 50%-42%.*** [Breitbart](#) (2/28, Hawkins) reports "a February 22-26 [poll](#) conducted by Morning Consult/Politico shows that voters support arming teachers in the wake of the Florida school shooting. The margin of support was 50% to 42%."



***Father Of Shooting Victim Calls On Trump To Denounce Threats Against Survivors, Families.***

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Wong) reports "the father of a 14-year-old girl who was gunned down in Parkland...has called on...Trump to address threats against student survivors and their families – many of whom have been outspoken about their desire for tighter gun-control laws." Fred Guttenberg "spoke to CNN about the occasionally vicious attacks against the survivors," saying, "We need our President Trump today to address it publicly and demand that everyone who is making these threats stop."

***Marjory Stoneman Douglas High Reopens After Deadly Shooting.*** The [AP](#) (2/28, Kennedy, Spencer, Replogle) reports that "students and teachers hugged and cried Wednesday as they returned under heavy police guard to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High for the first time since" the shooting. The AP says that "on the way in, teens were guarded by hundreds of police officers," who in turn "were accompanied by comfort animals, including dogs, horses and a donkey." The AP adds that "after school dismissed, members of the Guardian Angels wearing their trademark red berets lined the streets at a crosswalk."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/28, story 3, 2:25, Daiz) said "the day started with fourth period so students could be reunited with the classmates they were with during the shooting." The [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (2/28, Travis, Solomon, Geggis) reported the students "observed 17 seconds of silence in first period, one for each victim," and "were given goodies, like bagels and cream cheese, and comfort from 40 therapy dogs. And there were hugs all around." [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/28, story 4, 2:30, Sanders) reported "officials say 95 percent of the 3,000-plus students who go to school here showed up today. Fifteen students have told the school principal they don't think they can ever come back to this school." The [Miami Herald](#) (2/28, Harris) reports "it wasn't a normal school day," but "it was a first step." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/28, story 3, 2:25, Muir) similarly recounted the "emotional return to school...for the students in Parkland," while the [New York Times](#) (2/28, Healy), among other new outlets, also reports the story.

***Florida Strawberry Festival Allows Guns, But No Beer Or Pets.*** The [Tampa \(FL\) Tribune](#) (2/28, Cridlin) reports from Plant City, FL that "you can't buy a beer at the Florida Strawberry Festival. You can't bring a bottle of water or a dog that's not a service animal." However, "you can...sit in the front row of a Reba McEntire concert with a Smith & Wesson holstered to your chest" or "ride the Space Roller with a handgun." Said Festival President Paul Davis, "We do not encourage you to bring your weapon on grounds. ... But if you have a legal right to do it, then you can do it."

***Georgia Teacher In Custody After Firing Gun In Classroom.*** The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (2/28) reports "a North Georgia teacher, known as the longtime radio voice of Dalton High School football and basketball, is in custody after he fired at least one shot inside a classroom Wednesday, police said." The incident "sent panicked students running through hallways and alarmed parents who were already on edge in the wake of a mass shooting at a Florida high school earlier this month."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Truong) recounts that "Jesse Randall Davidson, a 53-year-old social studies teacher, barricaded himself inside a classroom at Dalton High School on Wednesday morning, according to Tweets from the Dalton Police Department." [USA Today](#) (2/28, Stanglin) further reports that "officers persuaded the teacher to surrender without incident after about 30 to 45 minutes," and "no one was injured aside from a female student who hurt her ankle while rushing to evacuate Dalton High School."

***GOP Rep. Young References Holocaust In Arguing Against Gun Control.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Debonis) reports that Rep. Don Young (R-AK), "recently argued against gun control to constituents by suggesting that Jews could have avoided perishing in the Holocaust if they had armed themselves." Citing a report from Alaska Public Media, the Post says Young last week told a gathering of the Alaska Municipal League, "How many millions of people were shot and killed because they were unarmed? Fifty million in Russia because their citizens weren't armed. How many Jews were put into the ovens because they were unarmed?"

***Dick's Sporting Goods, Which Sold A Gun To Cruz, To Stop Selling Assault-Style Rifles.*** The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/28, Masunaga) reports "Dick's Sporting Goods said Wednesday that it will no longer sell assault-style rifles or high-capacity magazines and will not sell guns to anyone under 21 after the shooting massacre at a Parkland." The retailer is also "taking a strong stance on gun control, saying in its statement that 'thoughts and prayers are not enough' and calling for elected officials to enact a ban on assault-style weapons. It will continue to sell other firearms."

[USA Today](#) (2/28, Hafner, Bomey) reports CEO Edward Stack told ABC's "Good Morning America" that "Dick's sold a shotgun to the Parkland school shooter through one of its stores last November," and "though the gun wasn't used in the shooting, the revelation spurred the company toward action." The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Siegel) quotes Stack as saying, "We did

everything by the book, and we did everything that the law required, and he was still able to buy a gun.” □ [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/28, story 3, 2:45, Holt) said Dick’s move “could be a tipping point in a growing corporate response to the Florida school shooting,” and showed Stack saying, “We don’t want to be part of the story any longer.”

In an interview with the [New York Times](#) (2/28, Creswell), Stack said, “When we saw what happened in Parkland, we were so disturbed and upset. ... We’re going to take a stand and step up and tell people our view and, hopefully, bring people along into the conversation.” The Times adds that “in 2012, after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School that killed 26 people, Dick’s removed assault-style rifles from its main retail stores.” However, “a few months later, the company began carrying the firearms at its outdoor and hunting retail chain, Field & Stream.” Stack said this time “the changes will be permanent.”

The □ [CBS Evening News](#) (2/28, story 4, 0:50, Glor) reported that “now just one major retailer will still sell assault-style weapons: Bass Pro Shop, which also owns Cabela’s. Wal-Mart, the nation’s largest retailer, stopped selling the weapons in 2015.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28), among other news outlets, also reports on Dick’s decision. Another [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28, Fuhrmans, Feintzeig) piece, meanwhile, remarks on the pressure felt by CEOs to take a stand on the gun issue, coming from activists and younger consumers.

[USA Today](#) (2/28) editorializes that “in the face of uncertainty on Capitol Hill, another option for...strong-willed” activist “students is to pressure corporations to step in where Congress fears to tread.” The students “notched one victory on this front Wednesday when a major retailer, Dick’s Sporting Goods, said it would stop selling assault-style rifles altogether, and block sales of high-capacity magazines and other guns to anyone under 21.” USA Today adds that “the action by Dick’s follows decisions by a host of companies – including United Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Best Western and MetLife – to sever discount deals with the National Rifle Association, even in the face of thuggish threats by NRA supporters.” Along similar lines, the [Washington Post](#) (2/28) writes in an editorial that “companies that once saw value in partnering with the National Rifle Association have decided to end their connections with the organization.” To the Post, “what the NRA ignores is that the Constitution it so often lauds gives citizens the right to decide with whom to do business. The NRA’s alienation of a large mass of consumers is its own responsibility.”

**Walmart Raises Age For Buying Firearms, Ammunition To 21.** [Politico](#) (2/28, Morin) reports Walmart “announced on Wednesday that it would no longer sell guns and ammunition to those younger than 21.” The company said in a statement, “In light of recent events, we’ve taken an opportunity to review our policy on firearm sales. ... Going forward, we are raising the age restriction for purchase of firearms and ammunition to 21 years of age. We will update our processes as quickly as possible to implement this change.”

The [AP](#) (2/28) notes “Walmart Inc. stopped selling AR-15 guns and other semi-automatic weapons in 2015.” The company “doesn’t sell bump stocks, the accessory attached to a semi-automatic gun that makes it easier to fire rounds faster. It also doesn’t sell large-capacity magazines. It also says it doesn’t sell handguns, except in Alaska.”

**After NRA Flap, Georgia Governor Agrees To Sign Tax Bill Without Tax Break For Delta.** The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (2/28, Bluestein) reports Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal “said he would reluctantly support a measure that stripped a lucrative tax break for Delta Air Lines but also includes broader cuts to the state’s income tax rate.” Deal “was a vocal supporter of the tax break, which would have slashed the \$50 million jet fuel tax exemption.”

## **Trump Blasts Sessions Over FISA Abuse Probe, And AG Fires Back.**

President Trump took to [Twitter](#) yesterday to ask, “Why is A.G. Jeff Sessions asking the Inspector General to investigate potentially massive FISA abuse. Will take forever, has no prosecutorial power and already late with reports on Comey etc. Isn’t the I.G. an Obama guy? Why not use Justice Department lawyers? DISGRACEFUL!” The tweet, as well as Sessions’ reply, generated extensive cable, print and online coverage. Nearly all of it – including some analyses on conservative outlets – was very unfavorable toward Trump.

□ [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/28, story 6, 2:00, Pierre) was only major network newscast to note the story last night. ABC said “the President has made his frustration with his Attorney General well-known for months,” but “for the first time,” Sessions “stood up to the President, writing in a statement, quote, ‘We have initiated the appropriate process that will ensure complaints against this department will be fully and fairly acted upon if necessary. As long as I am the Attorney General, I will continue to discharge my duties with integrity and honor.’” Pierre Thomas added that “sources say the message from Sessions was blunt: ‘Let me do the job as I see fit, or fire me.’” To the [Washington Times](#) (2/28, Miller), meanwhile, Sessions “declared he

wasn't quitting yet."

[USA Today](#) (2/28, Jackson) indicates that "not since July has Trump launched such pointed broadsides against his attorney general, who was one of Trump's earliest and most vocal supporters," and [Reuters](#) (2/28, Landay, Lynch) that "the latest fracas began with Trump flaying Sessions for having Justice Department Inspector General Michael Horowitz – not prosecutors – examine how the agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation obtained a warrant to monitor a former Trump campaign adviser, Carter Page."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Zapotosky, Demirjian) reports Trump's tweet "takes some liberties with the facts." [Politico](#) (2/28, Lima, Gerstein), for example, says "despite Trump's suggestion that Horowitz is an 'Obama guy,' Horowitz has been appointed to roles by presidents of both parties. He held Justice Department positions under four presidents: George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Obama, who appointed him inspector general in 2012." Moreover, the [AP](#) (2/28, Tucker) reports, "the report" Trump "suggests is late is actually not," and "the office he attacks as toothless has more power than he credits it with."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/28, Tanfani) reports Trump "has shredded long-standing norms by repeatedly attacking his own FBI and Justice Department," while the [New York Times](#) (2/28, Sullivan) refers to "the latest example of Mr. Trump...wading into Justice Department investigations." The Times adds that "previous presidents have allowed law enforcement a large degree of independence to keep from influencing their inquiries," but Trump "has consistently called for investigations into his political rivals and he has criticized Mr. Sessions for not being more aggressive."

The [AP](#) (2/28, Gurman) says that "this time" Trump "is angry that Sessions referred the allegations of employee misconduct to the inspector general, but that's exactly what that office is charged with doing. Its lawyers are part of the department and, contrary to Trump's claims, can and often do refer matters for prosecution." In fact, "Horowitz also launched the review of the FBI's handling of the Clinton case — the stated reason by Trump and Sessions for the dismissal of [former director] Comey in May." The [New York Post](#) (2/28, Fredericks), [The Hill](#) (2/28, Fabian) and [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28, Wilber, Viswanatha), among other news outlets, run similar reports.

Guy Benson, writing for [Townhall](#) (2/28), says that "setting aside the unseemly spectacle of Trump routinely humiliating of his own Attorney General – whom he clearly wants to serve as his personal political lapdog – Sessions has been correct in each of the instances that have drawn his boss' ire." Benson adds that "if Trump wants a reckless, legal advice-ignoring Attorney General, he should fire Sessions."

In an editorial, meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28) questions the wisdom of a CEO who berates his top subordinates in public the way Trump has with Sessions, and urges to President to order his Attorney General to appoint someone at DOJ whose job would be to make all documents pertinent to the FISA abuse probe available to the public.

Rep. Ron DeSantis said on [Fox News' The Ingraham Angle](#) (2/28) that Sessions "is a fine guy, but he doesn't have any prosecutorial power. He can't hold anyone accountable. He will take a year and a half to write a report and offer recommendations. ... You need a special counsel who can actually pursue those matters, somebody from outside the Justice Department, who is not afraid to upend the apple cart. That's what we need in this situation. The IG is just not going to cut it."

Sen. Ron Wyden said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/28), "I think it is just bizarre. I don't know any other way to characterize it. The reality is, is the President again not really understanding the function of the job. I mean no President is above the law. The position that Jeff Sessions holds means he's got to follow the law. It's not as if he's just working for the President. He's working for the American people."

Rep. Hakeem Jeffries said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/28), "Trump obviously misunderstands the role of the attorney general. The attorney general is the people's attorney. The White House counsel is the President's attorney. And so Jeff Sessions is correct in following procedures in this instance as it relates to the investigation."

Rep. Jerrold Nadler was asked on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/28) if Trump's comments are designed to get Sessions to resign. Nadler said, "It may very well be because if Sessions were to resign – remember, he's recused from the Russia investigation. The President could appoint someone else who was not recused who might then be able to fire Rosenstein or Mueller and sabotage the investigation and that clearly would be very much to the detriment. We must get to the bottom of the Russian interference in our election and we must get to the bottom of why the President refuses now to authorize our intelligence agencies to protect us against the Russian

interference in our next election.”

Former US Attorney Preet Bharara said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/28), “This is just another step in a series of steps the President has taken publicly to, A – discredit his attorney general who he picked and who he had work with him on his campaign, and also, to sort of try to direct who is involved in what investigations and what the results should be.”

David Swerdlick of the Washington Post said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/28) that “the President continues to either not understand or not acknowledge that he understands that the role of the attorney general is not to be the President’s personal attack dog, not to be his Roy Cohn, as the President has been quoted as saying.” Swerdlick added that Trump “is sending a message to all of his close advisers, ‘If you get crosswise with me, I am going to be merciless and it will never end.’”

**Gowdy Praises Horowitz, Says He Has “Complete Confidence In Him.”** [Bloomberg News](#) (2/28, Talev, Strohm) reports “the Republican chairman of the House Oversight Committee, Trey Gowdy, who regularly clashed with the Obama administration and Clinton, defended Horowitz as an impartial investigator.” Said Gowdy, “I have had a number of interactions with Inspector General Horowitz, including as recently as earlier this month. ... He has been fair, fact centric, and appropriately confidential with his work.” Added Gowdy, “He was confirmed by the US Senate without a single dissent. ... I have complete confidence in him and hope he is given the time, the resources and the independence to complete his work.”

**Sources Say Mueller Looking Into Trump’s Public Attacks On Sessions Last Summer.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Barrett, Dawsey, Helderman) reports “Special counsel Robert S. Mueller III has been investigating a period of time last summer when...Trump seemed determined to drive...Sessions from his job, according to people familiar with the matter who said that a key area of interest for the inquiry is whether those efforts were part of a months-long pattern of attempted obstruction of justice.” The Post adds “in recent months, Mueller’s team has questioned witnesses in detail about Trump’s private comments and state of mind in late July and early August of last year...to determine whether the president’s goal was to oust Sessions.”

**Trump Privately Refers To Sessions As “Mr. Magoo.”** In a story about the Mueller investigation’s take on the Trump-Sessions discord, the [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Barrett, Dawsey, Helderman) reports that “behind the scenes, Trump has derisively referred to Sessions as ‘Mr. Magoo,’ a cartoon character who is elderly, myopic and bumbling, according to people with whom he has spoken.” Trump has also “told associates that he has hired the best lawyers for his entire life, but is stuck with Sessions, who is not defending him and is not sufficiently loyal.”

**Thirteen House Republicans Call On Sessions To Appoint Second Special Counsel.** [The Hill](#) (2/28, Manchester) reports that in a letter, “thirteen House Republicans are calling on...Sessions to appoint a second special counsel to investigate Hillary Clinton.” These “conservative lawmakers sent a letter to Sessions on Wednesday requesting that he appoint a special counsel to investigate the end of the Clinton email probe, the start of the investigation into Russia’s election meddling and alleged surveillance abuses by the FBI.” The Hill adds, “The letter’s signers were GOP Reps. Lee Zeldin (N.Y.), Mark Meadows (N.C.), Jim Jordan (Ohio), Claudia Tenney (N.Y.), Francis Rooney (Fla.), Matt Gaetz (Fla.), Ted Budd (N.C.), Jody Hice (Ga.), Scott Perry (Pa.), Paul Gosar (Ariz.), Andy Harris (Md.), Louie Gohmert (Texas) and Dave Brat (Va.).”

**Hannity Defends Trump, Also Calls For New Special Counsel.** Sean Hannity said on [Fox News’ Hannity](#) (2/28), “In this case, I believe the President is right.” Hannity added that “it is time, knowing the facts as we have them, which are incontrovertible and overwhelming that the Attorney General has to do his job, serve the American people, and, yes, the rule of law and the Constitution. And Jeff Sessions, if he is not up to the task, if he wants to create a two tiered justice system, well, we have other options. How about just appoint special counsel?”

### **Hicks Announces She Will Leave White House Post.**

Hope Hicks’ announcement that she is leaving her White House job generated extensive media coverage, including the lead reports on all three major network newscasts. The coverage, which cast Hicks’ departure as a big surprise, highlighted her close ties to the President, as a well a sense of personnel upheaval in the wake of other high-profile departures from the White House. Despite unequivocal White House denials, some reports also suggested it was no coincidence that the news came one day after Hicks testified before the House Intel Committee, while others speculated her ties to disgraced former aide Rob Porter may have played a role in her decision.

The [AP](#) (2/28, Miller, Colvin) reports “White House officials and outside advisers suggested Hicks’ departure would strengthen chief of staff John Kelly’s control over what has been an oftentimes chaotic West Wing.” In a statement, “Kelly said Hicks had become ‘a trusted adviser



and counselor,' but behind the scenes the pair had occasionally clashed over her more informal role." [CNN](#) (2/28, Acosta, Diamond, Collins, Liptak), meanwhile, "Hicks and Kelly enjoyed an amiable working relationship and did not feud in the way the retired Marine general has with other top officials," and the [New York Times](#) (2/28, Haberman) further quotes Kelly as saying, "I quickly realized what so many have learned about Hope: She is strategic, poised and wise beyond her years. ... She became a trusted adviser and counselor, and did a tremendous job overseeing the communications for the president's agenda including the passage of historic tax reform. She has served her country with great distinction."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/28, Nelson, Morrongiello) reports White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said "there's 'no definitive timeline' on when she'll leave her role."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (2/28, lead story, 2:40, Holt) led with the story, and referred to a "bombshell change at the White House." NBC (Jackson) later spoke of "another dramatic departure in the West Wing: This time, someone who might as well be family to Donald Trump." The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/28, lead story, 3:25, Brennan) called Hicks the President's "longest-serving political aide and his most trusted." The White House "says she had been considering leaving her position for months, and now she wants to take on a job outside of government." The announcement "came a day after she testified before the House Intelligence Committee, which is investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election. Sources say she told the committee that her work for the President required her to tell white lies, but she never lied about Russia." CBS added that there have been "a lot of departures" from Trump's team, but "there's always turnover at the end of the first year of an administration due to burnout."

The [AP](#) (2/28, Miller, Colvin), however, refers to Hicks' departure as "just the latest manifestation of historic staff churn in the Trump administration," and [USA Today](#) (2/28, Korte) reports Hicks "was the fourth White House communications director of the Trump White House, and the longest serving — following the often chaotic tenures of Sean Spicer, Michael Dubke and Anthony Scaramucci."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/28, lead story, 3:40, Muir) said in its lead story, "Tonight, the growing list of departures right there on your screen. A little more than a year into this Administration, starting with Michael Flynn. The firings, the resignations. One more key name added to that list tonight, Hope Hicks." ABC (Vega) added, "Less than 24 hours after...Hicks emerged from nearly nine hours of testifying on Capitol Hill...the President's closest aide and long-time confidante unexpectedly resigning." While "the official line from the White House" is Hicks "has been thinking about leaving the job for some time and wants to spend more time with her family...the news comes with Hicks under fire for that testimony."

[CNN](#) (2/28, Acosta, Diamond, Collins, Liptak) cited "one source" who said the President "found out on Wednesday that she had made a final decision to leave." The [New York Post](#) (2/28, Fredericks) notes Trump praised Hicks in a statement, "Hope is outstanding and has done great work for the last three years. She is as smart and thoughtful as they come, a truly great person. ... I will miss having her by my side but when she approached me about pursuing other opportunities, I totally understood. I am sure we will work together again in the future." White House lawyer Ty Cobb, meanwhile, said, "I can't imagine anyone here leaving a bigger hole in the White House." [Politico](#) (2/28, Samuelsohn) quotes Cobb as saying, "She couldn't have been a more supportive or talented ally to me."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/28, Nelson, Morrongiello) notes "Hicks recently became the focus of intense media coverage when her reported boyfriend, former White House staff secretary Rob Porter, was accused by both of his ex-wives of abuse." Sanders "told a group of reporters Wednesday that Hicks 'had been thinking about it before' the Porter controversy and said Trump 'is not unhappy with her in any way' after Hicks reportedly testified that she told white lies on Trump's behalf." Added Sanders, "Guys, quit trying to make this a scandal. It's not." [The Hill](#) (2/28, Fabian, Anapol) also points out that "Hicks's role came under scrutiny earlier this month in the aftermath of the domestic abuse allegations against...Porter," as she "reportedly helped arrange public statements that were supportive of Porter."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Rucker, Parker) reports that Hicks, "a former fashion model," first "entered Trump's universe as a public relations consultant to his daughter, Ivanka." Hicks "then went to work directly for Ivanka Trump's company, from where she was recruited to join...Trump's presidential campaign in its infancy." The Post adds that "by her own admission, Hicks knew little to nothing about politics," but "had a preternatural ability to manage Trump's whims and appetites, soothe his moods and shape his public image to his liking." The [New York Times](#) (2/28, Haberman) indicates, meanwhile, that "she maintained one of the lowest public profiles of anyone to ever hold the job, declining to sit for interviews or appear at the White

House briefing room podium. That mystique added to the outsize attention she received."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/28, Miller) calls the news "startling," and [Reuters](#) (2/28, Holland) says her "departure will deprive Trump of an important confidant and adviser, someone who knows his likes and dislikes through more than three years of experience." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28, Ballhaus), among other news outlets, also reports the story this morning, while [Bloomberg News](#) (2/28, Talev) notes Hicks said in a statement, "I wish the president and his administration the very best as he continues to lead our country."

**CNN Report: Hicks Resigned After Being Berated By Trump Over House Testimony.** [The Hill](#) (2/28, Carter) reports "Trump reportedly berated...Hicks the day before her resignation, according to a new report." On [CNN's Out Front](#) (2/28), Erin Burnett, "reported Wednesday that Trump was angry with Hicks following her closed-door testimony to the House Intelligence Committee, in which she reportedly revealed she was sometimes required to tell 'white lies' as part of her work in the White House." Burnett "reported one of Trump's 'close allies' told CNN that Trump asked Hicks after her testimony 'how she could be so stupid.'" Added Burnett, "Apparently, that was the final straw for Hope Hicks."

John Roberts, however, said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/28), "I am told Hope Hicks really wanted to leave and she had been thinking about it for some time. She really wanted to get the testimony before the House Intelligence committee out of the way before she made the decision to leave." Dan Balz, in a [Washington Post](#) (2/28) analysis, writes "Hicks's resignation came the day after she spent hours testifying on Capitol Hill about Russian interference in the 2016 election, though there was no indication that the two are related." Balz also says Hicks' announcement, "stunning as it was, hardly qualifies as out of the ordinary in an administration in which chaos is a constant."

Amy Walter of the Cook Political Report, also on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (2/28), said that Hicks' admission that she has told "white lies" is "a pretty damaging piece of information to get out there. Anything that is put out on the record by your White House communications director has to come through that filter of somebody who has admitted to saying things that aren't true at different times. I do think that is a piece of this."

Sen. Ron Wyden said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/28), "This looks to me like more evidence of a White House in disarray. If we were going to name all the people who have either left or been fired just in the last couple months, we'd spend your whole show just going through it."

Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, asked on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/28) if he believes Hicks' resignation is related to the Russia investigation, said, "Absolutely. Another day, another scandal, another resignation in the Trump White House. What else is new? What we've seen from the very beginning of this Administration is nothing but chaos, crisis and confusion. And of course her resignation is related to the fact that, just yesterday, she was before the intelligence committee and acknowledged telling lies on behalf of the Trump Administration. ... That in and of itself is disqualifying." Hicks "was one of Donald Trump's closest associates throughout the campaign and into the administration. The evidence continues to mount that there was an apparent conspiracy between some members of the Trump campaign and Russian spies to sell out our democracy and then engage in a possible cover-up. And Hope Hicks appears to be connected to all of those particular elements."

Asked on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/28) if the Russia investigation played a role in Hicks' resignation, Rep. Jerrold Nadler said, "I don't know. I have no facts on that. All I do know is that when the communications people for the President admits she lied to the American people, that's a terrible betrayal and it's a terrible thing that the representative of the President lies to the American people."

Rep. Joaquin Castro, asked on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/28) if Hicks' resignation is related to her congressional testimony, said, "Quite possibly, also with the reporting that the President may have berated her for being honest." Castro added that "there was a point when she was going through that series of questions that her face almost looked as if she was saying why did I get involved with these people, with Donald Trump. That was my sense when I was looking at her when she was struggling to answer these questions."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

*"Donald Trump Gets A Lesson From That 'Very Bad Judge.'"* In an editorial, the [New York](#)

[Times](#) (2/28) points out that Judge Gonzalo Curiel, of the Southern District of California, who President Trump called “very hostile,” “a very bad judge” and a “hater of Donald Trump,” when he was “presiding over a long-running class-action lawsuit against Trump University,” on Tuesday “rejected a challenge by the State of California and several environmental groups to the administration’s waiver of environmental laws that could have held up” construction of the border wall. The Times argues that “there are in fact still people of principle in public service, and they’re doing important work every day to preserve our institutions and counteract this president’s worst impulses.” Curiel “has continued to do his job, carefully applying the law to the cases that come before him, no matter how obnoxious the litigants might be.” That, the Times adds, “requires a level of selflessness and devotion to democratic ideals that are alien to Mr. Trump.”

*“The European Union Must Stand Up To Polish Nationalism.”* In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/28) writes that “since coming to power in Poland in 2015, the nationalist Law and Justice party has enacted one outrageous measure after another, placing the nation’s courts under political control, trying to do the same with the news media, purging the civil service and, most recently, criminalizing any suggestion of Polish complicity in the Holocaust.” In response, the EU has “taken the unprecedented step of warning Warsaw that it could lose its voting rights in the organization if it carries on.” The Post says that while “it may not be easy for the European Union to follow through on that threat...it cannot back down.”

### **Washington Post.**

*“The NSA Chief Spelled Out The Russian Threat. Is Trump Listening?”* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/28) says NSA Director Rogers’ testimony that “we’re probably not doing enough” with regard to Russian election interference is proof that the Administration “is derelict in its duty to protect the country from a foreign power’s hostile intrusions.” The Post argues that Rogers “should be given all the authorities he needs to combat Russian election intrusion efforts at their source.”

*“Putin Is Getting Away With Murder In Syria.”* The [Washington Post](#) (2/28) editorializes that the Assad regime is “once again...conducting a brutal and criminal offensive against its own population,” and it “has been made possible, like so many before it, by Vladimir Putin. The Russian military is backing the Ghouta offensive, and Russian diplomats ensured that the Security Council resolution meant to stop it was held up for several days, then laced with loopholes providing a pretext for the slaughter to continue.” The Post argues that “in the absence of a firm US response to its latest outrages — and so far there is no sign of one — the Kremlin is unlikely to change course.”

*“The NRA Is Finally Paying The Price.”* The [Washington Post](#) (2/28) writes in an editorial that “companies that once saw value in partnering with the National Rifle Association have decided to end their connections with the organization.” To the Post, “what the NRA ignores is that the Constitution it so often lauds gives citizens the right to decide with whom to do business. The NRA’s alienation of a large mass of consumers is its own responsibility.”

### **Wall Street Journal.**

*“The White House Family Business.”* A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28) editorial that Jared Kushner has become a target of those who want President Trump out of office and he and his wife, Ivanka Trump, must decide if they would better serve the President by relinquishing their formal roles at the White House.

*“Trump vs. Jeff Sessions.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28) questions the wisdom of a CEO who berates his top subordinates in public the way President Trump has with Attorney General Sessions, and urges to President to order his Attorney General to appoint someone at DOJ whose job would be to make all documents pertinent to the FISA abuse probe available to the public.

*“Cleaning Up The Cleaned Up Tax Code.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/28) calls on lawmakers to correct a provision of the new tax law which allows farmers a larger deduction for selling to farm cooperatives as opposed to other operators. According to the Journal, some farmers could use the provision to reduce their taxable income to zero.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**



**New York Times:**

[Trump Calls Sessions's Handling of Surveillance Abuse Allegations 'Disgraceful'](#)  
[Kushner's Business Got Loans After White House Meetings](#)  
[Trump Stuns Lawmakers With Seeming Embrace of Gun Control](#)  
[Scared but Resilient, Stoneman Douglas Students Return to Class](#)  
[China's Censors Ban Winnie the Pooh and the Letter 'N' After Xi's Power Grab](#)  
[Miami Superintendent Chosen to Lead New York City Schools](#)

**Wall Street Journal:**

[Trump Urges Congress To Take Action On Guns](#)  
[Hope Hicks, Trump's Communications Director, To Resign](#)  
[If You Didn't Sell Stocks This Month, You've Probably Got FOMO](#)  
[Bill Ackman Surrenders In His Five-Year War Against Herbalife](#)

**Washington Post:**

[Mueller Digs Into Attempt To Force Sessions To Quit](#)  
[Hicks To Step Down As Communications Director](#)  
[Arpaio's Candidacy Will Test Trumpism](#)  
[Some In GOP Say Oil, Beaches Don't Mix](#)  
[Trump Sends Mixed Signals On Guns](#)

**Financial Times:**

[Dick's Sporting Goods To Stop Selling Assault-Style Rifles](#)  
[India Regains Title Of World's Fastest-Growing Major Economy](#)  
[Jared Kushner's Circle Of Power Shrinks In White House](#)  
[Theresa May Attacks Brussels Brexit Draft As Threat To UK Integrity](#)

**Washington Times:**

[Mayor's Tip-off Escalates Trump-state Squabble](#)  
[Trump Urges Senate To Pass Expanded Gun Check Bill](#)  
[Solemn Goodbye To Graham](#)  
[Universities Voice Support For Student Protests](#)  
[Fair Play Questions Raised After Wrestler's Victories](#)  
[Macron Tries Once More To Combat Radicalization](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Hope Hicks Resignation; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Florida Shooting-Students; Classroom Gunshot; Russia Probe; Trump-AG Sessions; Severe Weather; SF Police Shootout; LA Serial Rapist; Amazon-Package Theft; Billy Graham Funeral; Oscar Award News.  
**CBS:** Hope Hicks Resignation; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Florida Shooting-Students; Classroom Gunshot; Military Base-Chemical Envelope; Syrian Civil War; Sanctuary Cities; NBA News; Distracted Driving Research; UK Royal News; Organ Donor.  
**NBC:** Hope Hicks Resignation; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Florida Shooting-Gun Retailers; Florida Shooting-Students; Severe Weather; Distracted Driving Research; Billy Graham Funeral; Social Merchants Warning; Car Explosion; UK Royal News; NBA News; Montana Mayor.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Florida Shooting – 20 minutes, 40 seconds  
Hope Hicks Resignation – 9 minutes, 45 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Florida Shooting-Gun Retailers; Hope Hicks Resignation; Florida Shooting-Students.  
**CBS:** Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Florida Shooting-Gun Retailers; Hope Hicks Resignation; Billy Graham Funeral; Severe Weather.  
**FOX:** Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Florida Shooting-Gun Retailers; Hope Hicks Resignation.  
**NPR:** Hope Hicks Resignation; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Florida Shooting-Gun Retailers; School Shooting Foiled; Wall Street News.

**Washington Schedule**

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## Today's Events In Washington.

### White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Hosts a meeting on school safety; has lunch with the Vice President and the Secretary of Defense; meets with members of the Senate.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Has lunch with the President and the Secretary of Defense.

**US Senate:** 9:30 AM Senate Armed Services Committee considers NSA director nominee – Nominations hearing considers Lt. Gen. Paul Nakasone to be general and National Security Agency Director / Central Security Service Chief / U.S. Cyber Command Commander; Dr Brent Park to be National Nuclear Security Administration Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation; and Anne Marie White to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environmental Management Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm G50, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Fed Chair Powell presents Monetary Policy Report to Senate Banking Committee – Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs hearing on 'The Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress', with testimony from Federal Reserve Board Chair Jerome Powell Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 538, Washington, DC <http://www.federalreserve.gov> <https://twitter.com/federalreserve>

10:00 AM Nominations hearing considers John Ring to be a National Labor Relations Board member Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Governmental Affairs subcommittee hearing on federal managers' role in hiring – Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring', with testimony from Office of Personnel Management Associate Director of Employee Services Mark Reinhold; Department of Homeland Security Chief Human Capital Officer Angela Bailey; and Department of Commerce Chief Human Capital Officer Kevin Mahoney Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 342, Washington, DC <http://hsgac.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SenateHSGAC>

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Robert Pence to be U.S. Ambassador to Finland; Dr Judy Shelton to be European Bank for Reconstruction and Development U.S. Executive Director; and Trevor Traina to be U.S. Ambassador to Austria Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 419, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Transportation Secretary Chao testifies to Senate committee on administration's rebuilding infrastructure framework – Oversight hearing on 'The Administration's Framework for Rebuilding Infrastructure in America', with testimony from Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao; and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works R.D. James Location: Rm 406, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://epw.senate.gov/public/>

10:00 AM Senate Energy Committee hearing on cybersecurity in infrastructure – Hearing on 'Cybersecurity in our Nation's Critical Energy Infrastructure', with testimony from Assistant Secretary of Energy for Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability Bruce Walker; University of Washington Center for Information Assurance and Cybersecurity Executive Director Dr Barbara Endicott-Popovsky; Dragos CEO Robert Lee; National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO Jim Matheson; and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Professor of Engineering Dr William Sanders Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC [www.energy.senate.gov](http://www.energy.senate.gov)

10:00 AM Senate Judiciary Committee Executive Business Meeting – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including consideration of nominations of Joel Carson III to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit; Colm Connolly and Maryellen Noreika to be U.S. District Judges for the District of Delaware; William Jung to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida; Ryan Holte to be U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge; Jonathan Mitchell to be Administrative Conference of the United States Chairman; Billy Williams to be U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon; Mark James to be U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Missouri; Daniel Mosteller to be U.S. Marshal for the District of South Dakota; and Jesse Seroyer Jr. to be U.S. Marshal for the Middle District of Alabama Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:15 AM Senate Commerce, Science, Transportation committee hearing on Implementation of Positive Train Control – The hearing will focus on the implementation of the safety technology known as positive train control (PTC), amid concerns that some passenger railroads could fall short of meeting legal safety obligations, as well as actions or steps that could be taken to ensure compliance with the statutory deadline of December 31, 2018. Witnesses: Susan Fleming, Director of Physical Infrastructure, Government Accountability Office; Barry J.

DeWeese, Assistant Inspector General, Department of Transportation OIG; David L. Mayer, Chief Safety Officer, Metropolitan Transportation Authority; Richard Anderson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Amtrak. <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings?ID=09177549-8FA7-454A-9A43-9CA8F61D57D2> Location: 253 Russell  
<http://commerce.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/SenateCommerce>

11:00 AM 'Puerto Rico: The Road to Recovery and Reconstruction' conference – 'Puerto Rico: The Road to Recovery and Reconstruction' Albert Shanker Institute, American Federation of Teachers, and Hispanic Federation conference, on rebuilding Puerto Rico's economy and education system after the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria. Speakers include Democratic Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Richard Blumenthal, Independent Sen. Bernie Sanders, San Juan, Puerto Rico Mayor Yulin Cruz, Ponce, Puerto Rico Mayor Maria Melendez, American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten, Hispanic Foundation President Jose Calderon, and New York State Board of Regents Chancellor Betty Rosa Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, First St NE, Washington, DC [www.shankerinstitute.org](http://www.shankerinstitute.org)

2:00 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

Late Rev. Billy Graham continues lying in honor in the U.S. Capitol – Body of the late Rev. Billy Graham continues lying in honor in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, with members of the public and Capitol Hill community invited to 'pay their respects to the late reverend while he lies in rest' for two days, following his 21 Feb death at the age of 99 \* Dubbed 'America's Pastor', the evangelist is said to have preached to 215 million people in 53 countries, twice preaching to crowds of over one million. He provided counsel to 12 sitting U.S. presidents, from Harry Truman to Barack Obama, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1983 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996 \* Graham is only the fourth person to lay in honor at the Capitol, following U.S. Capitol Police officers John Gibson and Jacob Chestnut, who were killed in the line of duty in 1998, and civil rights icon Rosa Parks Location: U.S. Capitol, Rotunda, Washington, DC [www.speaker.gov](http://www.speaker.gov) <https://twitter.com/SpeakerRyan>

**US House:** 9:00 AM POSTPONED: House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on 'Army Readiness Posture' – POSTPONED: Readiness Subcommittee hearing on 'Army Readiness Posture', with testimony from U.S. Army Deputy Chiefs of Staff (G-3/5/7) Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson and (G-4) Lt. Gen. Aundre Piggee; Army National Guard Director Lt. Gen. Timothy Kadavy; and Chief of Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Charles Luckey Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov)  
<https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

9:30 AM POSTPONED: Rex Tillerson testifies to U.S. House Appropriations subcommittee hearing on budget – POSTPONED: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee 'FY19 Budget Hearing – Department of State and Foreign Assistance', with testimony from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2359, Washington, DC <http://appropriations.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseAppropsGOP>  
No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives.

Late Rev. Billy Graham continues lying in honor in the U.S. Capitol – Body of the late Rev. Billy Graham continues lying in honor in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, with members of the public and Capitol Hill community invited to 'pay their respects to the late reverend while he lies in rest' for two days, following his 21 Feb death at the age of 99 \* Dubbed 'America's Pastor', the evangelist is said to have preached to 215 million people in 53 countries, twice preaching to crowds of over one million. He provided counsel to 12 sitting U.S. presidents, from Harry Truman to Barack Obama, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1983 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996 \* Graham is only the fourth person to lay in honor at the Capitol, following U.S. Capitol Police officers John Gibson and Jacob Chestnut, who were killed in the line of duty in 1998, and civil rights icon Rosa Parks Location: U.S. Capitol, Rotunda, Washington, DC [www.speaker.gov](http://www.speaker.gov) <https://twitter.com/SpeakerRyan>

**Other:** 8:30 AM U.S. surgeon general and CDC acting director at U.S. Chamber of Commerce event on the opioid crisis – 'Combating the Opioid Crisis: From Communities to the Capital' U.S. Chamber of Commerce forum, highlighting possible solutions being explored by the federal govt, business community, public sector leaders, and local communities to fight the ongoing opioid epidemic, with speakers providing updates on the steps being taken in their communities to resolve the crisis. Participants include U.S. Surgeon General Dr Jerome Adams, CDC Acting Director Dr Anne Schuchat, Connecticut Attorney General George Jepsen, Republican Rep. Greg Walden, Stop the Addiction Fatality Epidemic founders James and Mary Winnefeld, EverFi co-founder and President of Global Partnerships Jon Champan, Aetna Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer Dr Harold Paz Location: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H St NW,

Washington, DC [www.uschamber.com](http://www.uschamber.com) <https://twitter.com/USChamber>

8:30 AM Dem Sen. Jeanne Shaheen speaks at CFR on 'Women's Contributions to Peace and Security' – Democratic Sen. Jeanne Shaheen speaks on 'Women's Contributions to Peace and Security' at the Council on Foreign Relations, discussing the implementation of the 'Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017', which requires the U.S. to improve women's participation in peace and security processes, and how women's contributions can improve the effectiveness of U.S. security operations around the world Location: Council on Foreign Relations, 1777 F St NW, Washington, DC [www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org) [https://twitter.com/CFR\\_org](https://twitter.com/CFR_org)

9:00 AM National Cherry Blossom Festival kick-off press conference – 2018 National Cherry Blossom Festival kick-off press conference to announce plans for the festival and the predicted peak blooming period. Speakers include Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, Embassy of Japan Minister for Communications and Cultural affairs Takehiro Shimada and National Mall and Memorial Parks/National Park Service Acting Superintendent Karen Cucurullo \* Festival begins 20 Mar Location: Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org](http://www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org) <https://twitter.com/CherryBlossFest>

9:00 AM CFPB Acting Director Mulvaney and SBA Administrator McMahon speak at U.S. Chamber of Commerce – U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Capital Markets Competitiveness hosts event to 'spark discussion about the landscape for small business lending'. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Acting Director Mick Mulvaney speaks about 'the role the Bureau will play in supporting small businesses' access to credit', and Small Business Administration Administrator Linda McMahon delivers remarks sharing the small business perspective on lending Location: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC [www.uschamber.com](http://www.uschamber.com) <https://twitter.com/USChamber>

1:30 PM GOP Rep. Mac Thornberry discusses U.S. nuclear policy and strategy at CSIS – 'Assessing the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review' Center for Strategic and International Studies Project on Nuclear Issues conference, on U.S. nuclear policy and strategy. Keynote speakers are Under Secretary of Defense for Policy John Rood, and Republican Rep. Mac Thornberry Location: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.csis.org> <https://twitter.com/CSIS>

2:00 PM DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee meeting – Democratic National Committee Rules and Bylaws Committee meeting, with agenda including a review of the Unity Reform Commission report and other party business Location: W Hotel Washington DC, 515 15th St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.democrats.org/> <https://twitter.com/TheDemocrats>

2:00 PM Potomac Institute Ambassador's Forum on 'Balkan Security Challenges' – Potomac Institute for Policy Studies International Center for Terrorism Studies Ambassador's Forum on 'Balkan Security Challenges: Past Lessons and Future Outlook', with former U.S. Marine Corps Commandant Gen. (Ret.) Alfred Gray, Albania Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Floreta Faber, Kosovo Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Vlora Citaku, Slovenia Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Stanislav Vidovic, Montenegro Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Nebojsa Kaluderovic, State Department Office of European Security Political, and Military Affairs' Richard Prosen, and International Law Institute Chairman Don Wallace Location: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 901 N Stuart St, Arlington, VA [www.potomacinstitute.org](http://www.potomacinstitute.org) <https://twitter.com/PotomacInst>

2:00 PM Saudi princess in conversation at Middle East Policy Council event – Middle East Policy Council hosts 'The Changing Role of Women and Youth in Saudi Arabia' conversation with Saudi Arabian Sports Authority Vice-President for Development and Planning Princess Reema bint Bandar Al Saud Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, CVC-202, Washington, DC <http://www.mepc.org> <https://twitter.com/MidEastPolicy>

6:00 PM Mexico Ambassador to the U.S. speaks at National Immigration Forum reception – National Immigration Forum Spring Reception, including discussion on cultural, economic, and security anxieties 'driving the migration debate' in the U.S. and across the globe. Speakers include Mexico Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Geronimo Gutierrez, More in Common co-founder Tim Dixon, and National Immigration Forum Executive Director Ali Noorani Location: Greenberg Traurig, 2101 L St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.immigrationforum.org/> <https://twitter.com/NatImmForum>

Bicameral, bipartisan lawmakers speak at New Jersey Chamber Congressional Dinner – New Jersey Chamber of Commerce 81st Annual Walk to Washington and Congressional Dinner, with remarks from Democratic Sens. Bob Menendez and Cory Booker, Republican Rep. Chris Smith, and New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy. The dinner is the highlight of the Walk to Washington, the Chamber's annual train trek to Washington, DC, where chamber members board a chartered Amtrak train and walk up and down the aisles discussing issues and generating business contacts \* Event continues tomorrow with reporters roundtable breakfast, followed by the charter train's

return trip to New Jersey Location: Washington Marriott Wardman Park, 2660 Woodley Rd NW, Washington, DC [www.njchamber.com](http://www.njchamber.com) [#chambertrain](https://twitter.com/njchamber)

White House Cabinet-Level Opioid Summit – White House Cabinet-Level Opioid Summit, with Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, and Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan among participants Location: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.whitehouse.gov/> <https://twitter.com/whitehouse>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Stephen Colbert:** “Yesterday, we found out that Jared’s security clearance was being downgraded and that he lost access to top-secret intelligence. I don’t know. He’s done a very good job of keeping his intelligence secret.”

**James Corden:** “Yesterday, White House Communications Director Hope Hicks spoke in front of a congressional committee giving testimony about the Russia investigation, during which she said that her work for President Trump sometimes requires her to tell white lies. Now, the President said that, like most things, he’s fine with it as long as they’re white.”

**James Corden:** “President Trump’s already released a statement saying Hope Hicks is leaving because she wanted to pursue other opportunities. And maybe that’s why she left. Clearly, the President can lie just fine without her.”

**James Corden:** “Even more bad news for President Trump: The faculty at Lehigh University has voted to rescind the honorary degree the school gave Trump in 1988. That is a pretty big hit for the President’s LinkedIn profile. This kind of blow-back is happening all across the White House. There is even talk that Eric Trump could lose his GED.”

**Trevor Noah:** “Yesterday, news came out that Jared Kushner lost his top-secret security clearance, possibly because he’s doing business with foreign countries that were trying to manipulate him. Then this morning, Trump got into a Twitter fight with his attorney general. Then just this afternoon, one of his closest and longest-standing advisers, Communications Director Hope Hicks, suddenly announced her resignation. Yeah, and this last piece of news was really shocking: Trump had a communications director?”

**Trevor Noah:** “The New York Times reported HUD spent \$31,000 on a new dining set for Secretary Ben Carson’s office as cuts were being planned for programs to the homeless and elderly and poor. Ben Carson says he didn’t know the table was purchased, but does not intend to return it. You know, there are times when I doubt Ben Carson’s blackness, but then something like this happens, and I’m like, ‘Yeah, that’s my dude.’”

**Jimmy Fallon:** “Speaking of Trump, his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, just lost his security clearance at the White House. They say it’s because of shady business dealings, financial problems, and lack of foreign policy experience. When he heard that, Trump said, ‘Okay, now you can call me dad.’”

**Seth Meyers:** “White House Communications Director Hope Hicks announced today that she is resigning from her position. Which is weird, because I thought hope left the White House a year ago. All the hopes are leaving.”

**Seth Meyers:** “In a new interview, Oprah said that she won’t run for President until she gets a sign from God. Said God, ‘Was this one not clear enough?’”

**Seth Meyers:** “According to reports, the Nobel Institute is investigating a possibly fake nomination of President Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize. Let me save you some time. It’s fake.”

**Seth Meyers:** “Donald Trump Jr. reported for jury duty today here in New York. And out of habit, he opened with ‘not guilty.’”

**Conan O'Brien:** "As of last Friday, Jared Kushner no longer has top security clearance. No top-secret security clearance. So now, if Kushner wants access to classified information, he'll have to read President Trump's tweets like everybody else."

**Jordan Klepper:** "Now after all this media BS, chief of staff John Kelly has downgraded Jared's top-secret clearance to regular secret clearance. That means he only gets the whack second-tier secrets, like, instead of knowing what went down at Area 51 in Nevada, he only gets to know what happened at Area 4 in Tampa."

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**Date:** Friday, March 02, 2018 6:30:45 AM

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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- KGVO-FM Missoula (MT): Ryan Zinke Pushes For Reorganization Of 'Marshmallow' Management.
- KCHH-FM Worden (MT): Secretary Zinke's Surprise Phone Call To "Montana Talks".
- Huffington Post: One Year In, Ryan Zinke's Conservation Legacy Would Make His Hero Scowl.
- The Hill: Trump Administration Hired More Than 75 Lawyers With Ties To Agencies They Oversee.
- Mother Jones: Lawmakers Want To Know Why The Trump Administration Demanded Sensitive Oil Data.



- Great Falls (MT) Tribune: Cold, Snow Has Cattle Freezing, Smothering On Blackfeet Reservation.
- Nevada Appeal: \$600,000 In Parks Grants Available For Local Governments.

#### **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

- Umatilla Tribes Enter Cooperative Agreement For Cobell Land Program.
- Wilton Rancheria Wins Court Decision In Favor Of Long-Awaited Casino.

#### **Bureau Of Land Management**

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- Elko (NV) Daily Free Press: BLM Offers 40 Parcels In Oil, Gas Lease Sale.
- Victorville (CA) Daily Press: DRECP Scoping Meeting In Hesperia Draws Diverse Crowd; BLM Seeks Comments.
- Grand Junction (CO) Daily Sentinel: 4 Counties Want Royalty Payments From Anvil Points.
- Moab (UT) Times-Independent: After Oil Well Venting Strong Odor Causes Alarm Among Nearby Residents.

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#### **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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- Oregonian: Lawsuit Seeks Stronger Protections For 'Threatened' Oregon Bird Species.
- Gainesville (FL) Sun: Lawsuit Likely Over 'Tough Little' Cedar Key Mole Skink.

#### **National Park Service**

- Washington Post: Peak Bloom For D.C.'s Famed Cherry Trees Will Begin March 17, Park Service Says.
- The Hill: 'March For Our Lives' Won't Take Place On National Mall Due To Scheduling Conflict.
- Associated Press: Park Service Unveils Concepts For Sperry Chalet Restoration.
- Oswegonian: Fort Ontario Considered For National Park Status Due To Bill By Congressman Katko.
- KULR-TV Billings (MT): Yellowstone National Park Celebrates Turning 146.
- Point Reyes (CA) Light: Comments Out Early On Park GMPA.
- Maui (HI) Now: Comment Period Regarding Proposed Fee Increase Deadline, March 2.

#### **US Geological Survey**

- E&E Publishing: Military Site Faces 'Shocking' Risk Of Being Swamped.
- Associated Press: Wanted: 'Citizen Scientists' To Help Count Joshua Trees.
- Bloomberg News: Nor'easter Set To Hit U.S. East Coast With Floods, High Winds.

#### **Opinion Pieces**

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- Our View: Offshore Drilling Not Worth The Risk.
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- Trump's Tumultuous Cabinet, Ranked.
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- New York Times: NRA Lobbyist Suggests Trump Has Backed Off Support For Gun Control.
- Breitbart: Trump Touts Manufacturing Growth, 49-Year Low In Jobless Claims.

- Washington Examiner: EPA Begins Dismantling Obama Methane Rules.
- Associated Press: EPA Moves To Roll Back Further Clean Air, Water Rules.
- Bloomberg News: Corporate America Seen Taking On Issues The Government Won't.

### Editorial Wrap-Up

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## DOI In The News

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### Zinke Cancels Chaco Canyon Lease Sale.

The [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (3/1, Coleman) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "canceled an oil and gas lease sale near Chaco Canyon in northern New Mexico until the agency can further review the impact on cultural artifacts in the area." Zinke said in an exclusive interview Thursday afternoon that "there have been some questions raised" so the Bureau of Land Management will hold off on the sale. The sale had been set for March 8.

### Oil Was Central In Decision To Shrink Bears Ears Monument, Emails Show.

The [New York Times](#) (3/2, Lipton, Friedman) reports that "even before President Trump officially opened his high-profile review last spring of federal lands protected as National Monuments, the Department of Interior was focused on the potential for oil and gas exploration at a protected Utah site, internal agency documents show." The debate began "as early as March 2017, when an aide to Senator Orrin Hatch, Republican of Utah, asked a senior Interior Department official to consider reduced boundaries for Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah to remove land that contained oil and natural gas deposits that had been set aside to help fund area public schools." A map that Hatch's office provided, "which was transmitted about a month before Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke publicly initiated his review of national monuments, was incorporated almost exactly into the much larger reductions President Trump announced in December, shrinking Bears Ears by 85 percent."

### Nat'l Monument Cut Benefited Utah Lawmaker, Watchdog Told.

[Law360](#) (3/1, Rodriguez) reports that "a conservation group said Thursday it is asking the U.S. Department of the Interior's inspector general to conduct a formal investigation into the modified boundaries of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, claiming a Utah state legislator is personally profiting from the changes." Western Values Project said Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "recommended reducing the size of the monument 'in line with what state and local leaders requested,' including Kane County leaders, one of which is state Rep. Mike Noel."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/1, Grandoni) reports that "Noel owns a 40-acre parcel of land that was contained entirely within the former boundaries of Grand Staircase-Escalante, according to

documents published by the Western Values Project." The Trump Administration "redrew the boundaries in such a way as to connect that land with acreage outside the national monument, in effect allowing for better potential access to it." In response, Noel "told The Washington Post he did not ask Interior to shrink the monument so that the 40-acre piece of land was no longer inside of it."

### **Ryan Zinke Pushes For Reorganization Of 'Marshmallow' Management.**

[KGVO-FM](#) Missoula, MT (3/1, King) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "says he is working on restructuring the Department of the Interior and its multiple bureaucracies." According to Zinke, "the complex management system currently in use, leads to confusion and ineffective spending of taxpayer dollars." He "says he hopes the reorganization will lead to better communication with local communities and give the federal government less of a 'heavy hand.'"

### **Secretary Zinke's Surprise Phone Call To "Montana Talks".**

[KCHH-FM](#) Worden, MT (3/1, Flint) reports that Thursday's "Montana Talks" with Aaron Flint received "a surprise phone call" from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke. Zinke "talked about his one year anniversary as secretary, moving more jobs and key leadership positions in federal land management agencies out to the West, and energy development and access to federal lands." He also commented on President Trump's "latest remarks in the gun control debate."

### **One Year In, Ryan Zinke's Conservation Legacy Would Make His Hero Scowl.**

The [Huffington Post](#) (3/1, D'Angelo) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "speaks often of his love for America's conservationist president, Theodore Roosevelt." However, Theodore Roosevelt IV, the president's great-grandson, "said he's 'reluctant to put words in a dead man's mouth,' but has no doubt his ancestor would condemn what Zinke is doing." According to Roosevelt, "many in the Roosevelt family...are angry that Zinke keeps invoking their ancestor to misrepresent his own actions." Roosevelt said, "His concept of how you protect public lands and the values that they represent are certainly very different than the old lion's. And when he says he's going to live up to the legacy of [Teddy], he's not doing it."

### **Trump Administration Hired More Than 75 Lawyers With Ties To Agencies They Oversee.**

[The Hill](#) (3/1, Wilson) reports that "more than 75 Trump administration lawyers either represented clients in the industries they regulate or had clients with business before the government, according to a report released Thursday by the liberal watchdog group Public Citizen." Notably, Deputy Interior Secretary David Bernhardt, "a former lawyer and lobbyist at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, once represented California's Westlands Water District, the largest water district in the country that was involved in improper payments from the Bureau of Reclamation, according to an inspector general report." Also, Daniel Jorjani, the Interior Department's principal deputy solicitor, "came from groups tied to the billionaire conservative donors Charles and David Koch, who are the majority owners of Koch Industries."

### **Lawmakers Want To Know Why The Trump Administration Demanded Sensitive Oil Data.**

[Mother Jones](#) (3/1, Federman) reports that "lawmakers are demanding answers from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke about why political appointees in his department asked for early access to data from a study of oil and gas deposits on Alaska's North Slope—a request that led to the resignation of a top scientist at the US Geological Survey." In a letter to Zinke Tuesday, Reps. Raul Grijalva and Donald McEachin "said the events, if true, were 'the latest in a troubling series of attacks on scientific integrity and ethical lapses' at the department." The letter "calls on Zinke to provide details about why Interior officials wanted to see the unpublished data, how they intended to use it, and if they ever actually reviewed it before the final report was made public."

### **Cold, Snow Has Cattle Freezing, Smothering On Blackfeet Reservation.**

The [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (3/1, Puckett) reports that "significant cattle losses are expected on the Blackfeet Reservation as a result of a brutal winter that brought almost continual heavy snow, bitter temperatures and blowing wind in the month of February alone, officials said Thursday." Sen. Jon Tester "said Thursday he's calling on federal officials to be ready to provide disaster relief as large amounts of snow continue to accumulate across the state, and personally discussed local needs with FEMA Administrator Brock Long." Tester "said he's also requesting immediate assistance from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue highlighting the added strain that snowfall puts on agriculture operations and work needed to

prevent flooding from future snowmelt.”

### **\$600,000 In Parks Grants Available For Local Governments.**

[Nevada Appeal](#) (3/1) reports that the Interior Department has “made available \$600,000 to park and recreation developments through the Land and Water Conservation Fund program.”

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Umatilla Tribes Enter Cooperative Agreement For Cobell Land Program.**

The [Nation Sun News](#) (3/1) reports that “the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have signed a second cooperative agreement as part of the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations.” According to the article, “as part of the new agreement, outreach meetings are being held in March to inform landowners about the program.” Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs John Tahsuda said, “By partnering with the Umatilla Confederated Tribes for a second round of implementation at their location, the department will build off of our successful initial implementation and maximize the use of the funds from the Cobell settlement.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [East Oregonian](#) (3/1, McDowell).

### **Wilton Rancheria Wins Court Decision In Favor Of Long-Awaited Casino.**

The [Nation Sun News](#) (3/1) reports that “a federal judge has sided with the Wilton Rancheria, rejecting a challenge to the tribe’s long-awaited casino project in northern California.” The Bureau of Indian Affairs “approved the tribe’s land-into-trust application on January 19, 2017, the last full day of the Obama administration.” However, opponents claimed “the official who made the decision wasn’t authorized to do so.” Judge Trevor McFadden rejected those arguments.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (3/1, Garrison) reports that McFadden held “that a federal law regarding agency vacancies gave Larry Roberts, the principal deputy assistant secretary for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the authority to issue the decision.” The [Elk Grove \(CA\) Citizen](#) (3/1, Armstrong) reports that Wilton Rancheria’s chairman, Raymond Hitchcock said, “We are pleased that the court rejected this desperate attempt by special interests and their high-priced law firms to use the legal system to try to stifle competition.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Law360](#) (3/1, Powell).

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Wyoming Fights Methane Rule, Again.**

The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (3/1, Richards) reports that “Wyoming is trying to bring the methane rule fight back to federal court in the Cowboy State with the aim of scrapping the regulations until the Interior Department gives the country new ones.” Wyoming and “other industry states say compliance is unfair and the rule should be tabled until the Interior is finished with its revision process.” The state counsel argued in court documents filed Wednesday, “Neither the regulated community nor the BLM is capable of switching on compliance with the Waste Prevention Rule overnight.”

### **BLM Offers 40 Parcels In Oil, Gas Lease Sale.**

The [Elko \(NV\) Daily Free Press](#) (2/28) reports that the Bureau of Land Management will “offer 40 parcels in Elko, Eureka and Nye counties totaling approximately 69,691 acres at its March quarterly oil and gas lease sale.” The article notes that the auction “does not include the 54,000 acres around the Ruby Mountains being analyzed by the U.S. Forest Service after an expression of interest was filed in April 2017.” According to the article, “the environmental analysis and draft decision notice for those parcels is expected to be released by mid-March.”

### **DRECP Scoping Meeting In Hesperia Draws Diverse Crowd; BLM Seeks Comments.**

The [Victorville \(CA\) Daily Press](#) (3/1) reports that the Bureau of Land Management’s on Wednesday held its “third scoping meeting since the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECEP) reopened for amendments in early February.” The meeting drew was attended by “well over 100 people, including High Desert residents, members of conservation groups and county officials, turned out Wednesday evening at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel.” Jerome “Jerry” Perez, state director of the Bureau of Land Management, said, “This is an important topic for many in

this room. We're here to gather information ... what you think about the DRECP. It's not intended to be a public hearing. Help us figure out what will be the breadth and scope of what we may need to do in the future."

#### **4 Counties Want Royalty Payments From Anvil Points.**

The [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (3/2, Ashby) reports that "if the federal government ever releases royalty payments to the state from the closed Anvil Points oil shale research facility, the Legislature's Joint Budget Committee knows how it should be distributed." Under a bill that will be debated Monday, that federal mineral lease money "would go to four northwest Colorado counties." Under HB1249, "Garfield and Rio Blanco counties would receive 40 percent each while Mesa and Moffat counties would see 10 percent each."

#### **After Oil Well Venting Strong Odor Causes Alarm Among Nearby Residents.**

The [Moab \(UT\) Times-Independent](#) (3/1, Egelhoff) reports that local residents were alarmed by a strong odor near a well site in Utah. Workers at the well – Three Mile 24-21D, operated by Wesco Operating Co. on Bureau of Land Management property – said the odor was non-toxic. BLM Public Affairs Specialist Lisa Bryant said, "The BLM immediately followed up with the company after receiving reports from nearby private landowners of hydrogen sulfide odors. Following on-site inspections, the BLM determined the company had followed safety precautions for the venting operations. Monitoring indicated that hydrogen sulfide levels did not rise to concentrations that triggered health or environmental concerns."

### **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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#### **Enviros Plead With Ga. Governor To 'Stand Up For Our Coast'.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (3/1, Swartz) reports both "industry supporters and environmental advocates" appeared Wednesday for an informational session on the Interior Department's draft five-year plan for offshore energy development. Opponents to drilling have criticized Governor Nathan Deal (R) for failing to speak out against drilling off Georgia's coast. However, Georgia Petroleum Council Executive Director Hunter Hopkins argued, "It's been 30-plus, almost 40, years since anybody has surveyed off of the coast and looked for oil, natural gas deposits," likening the old technology to X-rays. But with advancements in technology, he said, new surveys could look more like MRIs. According to E&E, Hopkins "and other supporters talked up jobs, economic development and energy independence that would come with offshore drilling. Being able to drill successfully could turn Georgia into a fuel-production state, with the royalties flowing back into the state budget."

[WABE-FM](#) Atlanta (3/1, Samuel) reports online that Deal "has been on the fence" about drilling off Georgia's coast, "but he hasn't said 'no.'" Hopkins said, "We were just pleased with that position, that he did not technically shut the door." According to WABE, "Companies should at least be allowed to look for oil and gas off Georgia's coast, Hopkins said, to find out if there's anything worth drilling for. If there is, he said, it could bring more jobs to Georgia, though any actual drilling could still be years off."

*Offshore Drilling Opponents Rally At Georgia Capitol.* The [Bluffton \(SC\) Today](#) (3/1, Landers) reports that "opponents of offshore drilling staged a rally at the Georgia Capitol on Wednesday ahead of an afternoon 'listening session' on the issue that federal regulators scheduled in Atlanta." The event was "organized by the Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast, One Hundred Miles, Environment Georgia, the Savannah and Ogeechee riverkeepers and the Georgia chapters of the Sierra Club and Surfrider Foundation."

#### **US Officials To Talk Offshore Drilling With Long Islanders.**

The [AP](#) (3/2) reports Interior Department officials are heading to Long Island to discuss opening up new areas to offshore drilling with local residents. Friday's session will be hosted by Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-NY), who "opposes the Trump Administration's proposal to authorize new areas for offshore drilling for oil and natural gas."

#### **Rhode Island Protesters Decry Federal Offshore Drilling Plan.**

The [AP](#) (3/1, McDermott) reports protesters opposed to the proposed expansion of offshore drilling in the US "crashed a hearing on the issue in Rhode Island on Wednesday, saying the plan is bad for the environment." Approximately 100 protesters gathered at the Statehouse before

marching to the BOEM meeting. [WPRI-TV](#) Providence, RI (2/28, Machado) reports environmental activists on Wednesday "swarmed a meeting of the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, asking the federal employees there not to allow companies to drill for oil and gas off of Rhode Island's coastline." Protesters marched from the State House to the site of the BOEM meeting chanting "no drill, no spill."

The [AP](#) (2/28) reports opponents of the Trump administration's proposed offshore drilling plan "are expected to gather in Providence as federal ocean regulators hold a public meeting" on Wednesday. Environmental group Save the Bay is planning to host a rally at the Statehouse that will feature remarks from Gov. Gina Raimondo (D) beforehand. [WPRI-TV](#) Providence, RI (2/28, Nunes) reports Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo (D) believes "drilling would threaten the state's waters, which are a vital part of the economy and ecosystem." Raimondo plans to "partner with state environmental leaders" during "an event Wednesday protesting Republican President Donald Trump's new offshore drilling plan."

### **SC Republicans Split With Gov. McMaster On Offshore Drilling.**

[Columbia \(SC\) State](#) (2/28, Marchant) reports a new poll by Winthrop University shows "51 percent of South Carolinians surveyed opposed offshore drilling," while 41 percent were in favor of it. Self-identified Democrats were "71 percent opposed and 24 percent favoring," while self-identified Republicans were "63 percent favoring and 30 percent opposed." The [Charleston \(SC\) Post and Courier](#) (2/28, Byrd) reports the poll results "could spell trouble for Republican Gov. Henry McMaster, who is now at odds with his base on this issue at a time when he's trying to fend off four other GOP challengers in the 2018 governor's race."

### **Cape Cod Drilling Protesters Dress To Express.**

The [Cape Cod \(MA\) Times](#) (2/27, Fraser) reports the BOEM "didn't allow oral testimony at its public meeting Tuesday" in Boston on the proposed offshore drilling plan, but that "didn't stop people from making their voices heard." On the floor above the official hearing, "a costumed, sign-bearing crowd jammed into a conference room...to listen to representatives from a panoply of environmental organizations, more than 20 nonprofit organizations, state elected officials, and others, speak in opposition to exploration and drilling anywhere off the New England coastline." Speakers expressed concerns on a range of topics, including "the possible effects of an oil spill on fisheries, marine life and...valuable coastline and tourist economy."

### **AG Fighting Plan To Open Mass. Coast To Offshore Oil Drilling.**

[WFXT-TV](#) Boston (2/28) reports Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey joined a rally in Boston on Tuesday opposing a federal plan to open Massachusetts' coasts to offshore oil drilling. The rally was held "ahead of a meeting with the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)." Healey said, "This reckless and arbitrary plan threatens to destroy our multi-billion-dollar fishing and tourism industries and our vibrant marine and coastal ecosystems."

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Tester Calls Out Trump On Water Project Funding.**

The [Havre \(MT\) Daily News](#) (3/1, Ross) reports that President Trump's proposed budget "represents a step backward for Rocky Boy's/North Central Montana Regional Water System, Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., said in a letter to Trump Tuesday, the same day he and Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont., announced a hearing for a bill that could provide funding for such projects." Cuts to the Bureau of Reclamation in the president's proposal, Tester said, "would reduce funding for the project by \$8.2 million, and the Fort Peck Reservation/Dry Prairie Water System by \$10.5 million." Tester said "These drastic cuts are in direct contradiction to the bipartisan support seen throughout Congress for investing in these types of water projects that provide clean water to rural communities. I respectfully urge your Administration to support the use of funds that accrue to the Reclamation Fund for the purpose of supporting western water development, and rural water infrastructure projects and authorized Indian water rights settlements are well within that scope," he continued.

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **A New Economic And Ecological Concept For Offshore Decommissioning.**



[E&P Magazine](#) (3/1, Salardi, Allen) reports Xodus Group and Subcon International have formed a new partnership that will deploy "Integrated Rigs to Reef (IR2R) decommissioning solutions" that will solve "the issue of the high cost of oil and gas asset decommissioning as well as...the reduction in fish habitats." The IR2R approach overcomes the shortcomings of the traditional R2R technique "by augmenting the obsolete oil and gas structures with purpose-built reef modules" that "enhance the new habitat and convert it into a more productive purpose-built artificial reef." Such a solution optimizes "the ecological benefit" and turns the structure into "a new asset whose ownership and liability can be transferred to the relevant government agency in charge of habitat restoration or to another stakeholder."

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Court: Decision Ending Sea Otter Relocation Program Legal.**

The [AP](#) (3/1) reports that "a federal appeals court has upheld a decision by federal wildlife officials to end a program to relocate endangered sea otters off the California coast." The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Thursday "rejected lawsuits by fishing industry groups that argued Congress required the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to continue the program indefinitely." [Law360](#) (3/1, Greene) reports that court found "that the fishermen's contention that the program couldn't stop made 'no sense whatsoever.'"

Additional coverage was provided by [KSBW-TV](#) Monterey, CA (3/1, Larson).

### **Lawsuit Seeks Stronger Protections For 'Threatened' Oregon Bird Species.**

The [Oregonian](#) (3/1, Williams) reports that "an environmental advocacy group is suing the federal government to strengthen protections for a bird species that only lives in the Pacific Northwest, which they say could soon go extinct." The Center for Biological Diversity "filed the complaint Wednesday seeking to change the status of the streaked horned lark from 'threatened' to 'endangered' under the Endangered Species Act."

### **Lawsuit Likely Over 'Tough Little' Cedar Key Mole Skink.**

The [Gainesville \(FL\) Sun](#) (3/1, Swirko) reports that the Center for Biological Diversity is expected to file a lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the Cedar Key mole skink. At issue is the FWS' "failure to act on a petition to list the skink as threatened or endangered, said Elise Bennett, an attorney for the center." The center has "filed a required notice of intent to sue the federal agency, which will have 60 days to respond."

## **National Park Service**

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### **Peak Bloom For D.C.'s Famed Cherry Trees Will Begin March 17, Park Service Says.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Chiu) reports that the National Park Service announced Thursday that Washington's cherry blossoms are "expected to reach peak bloom between March 17 and March 20." According to Mike Litterst, a spokesman for the National Park Service, "if weather conditions are optimal – mild temperatures and no high winds or heavy rains – the blossoms could stay on trees for about a week to 10 days." This year's National Cherry Blossom Festival will run from March 20 to April 15.

Also reporting are [USA Today](#) (3/1, Trejos), [USA Today](#) (3/1), the [Washington Patch](#) (3/1, Taylor), and [WUSA-TV Washington](#) Washington (3/1).

### **'March For Our Lives' Won't Take Place On National Mall Due To Scheduling Conflict.**

In its "Blog Briefing Room" blog, [The Hill](#) (3/1, Carter) reports that "a pro-gun control march planned for later this month in Washington, D.C., won't take place on the National Mall due to a scheduling conflict." The group organizing the "March for Our Lives" event "submitted a permit request to the National Park Service to hold the event on the Mall on March 24." NPS spokesman Mike Litterst said "the agency had already received a permit application for some of the same areas on the day requested by the march organizers."

Also reporting are the [Washington Post](#) (3/1, Moyer), the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/1, Mayfield), [NPR](#) (3/1, Domonoske), and [WRC-TV Washington](#) Washington (3/1, Swalec).

### **Park Service Unveils Concepts For Sperry Chalet Restoration.**



The [AP](#) (3/1) reports that the National Park Service on Wednesday “released four concepts for the restoration of Glacier National Park’s Sperry Chalet dormitory.” The concepts “range from stabilizing the walls but not rebuilding the structure – instead, setting up temporary wall tents for visitors – to reconstructing the dorm to as ‘close to as it was’ with some critical building code updates.” The comment period for the project ends April 2.

Also reporting are the [Missoula Current \(MT\)](#) (3/1, Devlin), the [Daily Inter Lake \(MT\)](#) (3/1, Reilly), and [Montana Public Radio](#) (3/1, Ouellet).

### **Fort Ontario Considered For National Park Status Due To Bill By Congressman Katko.**

The [Oswegonian](#) (3/2, Flavell) reports that Fort Ontario is “currently in the process of becoming a national park.” Rep. John Katko “wrote a bipartisan bill that, if passed, would direct the National Park Service to study Fort Ontario and evaluate the park’s national significance to determine whether it should change from being recognized as a state park to a national park.” The House “approved the bipartisan bill with a unanimous voice vote, and the bill will now advance to the Senate.”

### **Yellowstone National Park Celebrates Turning 146.**

[KULR-TV](#) Billings, MT (3/1, Crossley) reports that Yellowstone National Park celebrated its 146th birthday on Thursday. Also reporting are [Yellowstone Insider](#) (3/1, Reichard) and [WWTV-TV Cadillac \(MI\)](#) Cadillac, MI (3/1, Shea).

### **Comments Out Early On Park GMPA.**

The [Point Reyes \(CA\) Light](#) (3/1, Guth) reports that the National Park Service has “received nearly 3,000 public comments on its initial concepts for an amendment to its general management plan that will determine the future of ranch and elk management in the Point Reyes National Seashore and the northern reaches of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.” The NPS published the comments “prematurely in response to a Freedom of Information Act request from a local group that believes the agency is leading ranchers to ‘death by a thousand cuts.’” Seashore spokeswoman Melanie Gunn “said that as a result of complying with the FOIA request, the park released the raw comments without an accompanying analysis to identify basic trends.”

### **Comment Period Regarding Proposed Fee Increase Deadline, March 2.**

The [Maui \(HI\) Now](#) (3/1) reports that “the public comment period regarding a proposed fee increase to the tri-park annual pass will close” on Friday. The proposal would “raise the tri-park annual pass from \$30 to \$50, beginning on May 1, 2018, and conforms to the nationwide pricing structure for other national parks with similar visitation.” Superintendent Natalie Gates said, “These parks are here for the American people. Public input – for or against this proposed fee increase– is really important for us.”

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Military Site Faces ‘Shocking’ Risk Of Being Swamped.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (3/1, Waldman) reports that “a multibillion-dollar military installation in the Pacific that has provided key testing for the U.S. defense against a possible North Korean nuclear strike could become uninhabitable in less than two decades due to climate change.” The Army’s Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site “on the low-lying Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands is expected to be submerged by seawater at least once a year, according to a new study ordered by the Department of Defense.” U.S. Geological Survey research geologist Curt Storlazzi, the study’s lead author, said, “We were very surprised. Most of the historical publications ... have generally been end-of-century, 2100, 2150, things like that. We’re talking about in people’s lifetimes; we’re talking about in expected life spans of construction, and so that was shocking.”

### **Wanted: ‘Citizen Scientists’ To Help Count Joshua Trees.**

The [AP](#) (3/2, Brea) reports that “using satellite and aerial imagery already widely available on the internet,” researchers “hope to compile landscape-scale data on the presence and absence of Joshua trees across their native range in California, Nevada, Arizona and Utah.” According to the article, “the resulting distribution map could be used to identify populations worthy of further study or protection and help trace the impacts of climate change on one of the Mojave’s keystone species.” Todd Esque, a Henderson-based ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, “described

the process during a February outing with the Friends of the Arizona Joshua Tree Forest, a volunteer group devoted to preserving the nationally recognized stand of trees in Mohave County, Arizona, about 115 miles southeast of Las Vegas.” Esque “said researchers will need to recruit an army of volunteer ‘citizen scientists’ to help map the entire desert.”

### **Nor’easter Set To Hit U.S. East Coast With Floods, High Winds.**

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/1, Sullivan) reports that “a potentially record-breaking nor’easter is set to pummel the East Coast with wind, snow and rain Friday, putting billions of dollars of coastal real estate at risk from ‘unprecedented flooding.’” The U.S. Geological Survey is “sending crews along the coast from Maine to Delaware to monitor the storm.” Ronald Busciolano, a supervisory hydrologist with the USGS, said in a statement, “Nor’easters can cause higher tides than hurricanes in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.”

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **President Trump’s Public Lands Agenda Is Extremely Unpopular.**

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (3/1, Arce), Maite Arce, president and CEO of the Hispanic Access Foundation, writes that “a new poll of California voters provides more evidence that the Trump administration’s efforts to rollback protections on national monuments are not only widely unpopular, but also have communities concerned about the future of these special places.” The Hispanic Access Foundation poll, “conducted by David Binder Research, found that more than three in four Californians (78 percent) oppose actions taken by President Trump late last year to remove protections from about 2 million acres of public lands from Utah’s Bears Ears and Grand Escalante-Staircase National Monuments. Only 18 percent support his decision.” Moreover, “among people of color, the opposition is 84 percent versus 12 percent in support.”

### **Our View: Offshore Drilling Not Worth The Risk.**

The [Winston-Salem \(NC\) Journal](#) (3/1) editorial board writes that BOEM representatives, who held the department’s “only public meeting in the state for commenting on the Trump administration’s plan to open our coast to offshore drilling” this week, were still greeted by “hundreds of environmentalists,” despite restrictions on public comments. The Journal says the North Carolina Petroleum Council’s David McGowan said, “Gov. Cooper and other outspoken opponents of offshore energy development have said ‘not off our coast’ or essentially ‘not in my backyard.’ This is not a productive, responsible state energy strategy.” However, according to the Journal, “actually it is. What’s irresponsible is risking such a unique treasure as our coast for temporary financial gain from a relatively limited resource.” The Journal concludes that the “proposal has drawn opposition from 14 coastal-state governors, Democrats and Republicans alike, including Gov. Henry McMaster of South Carolina and Florida Gov. Rick Scott, who has been promised an exemption from the drilling plan... These people know what they’ve got and they know what we know – it’s not worth the risk.”

### **Sentence Sends A Message.**

The [Eugene \(OR\) Register-Guard](#) (3/1) editorializes that Malheur refuge takeover participant Ryan Payne’s prison sentence is important in light of the acquittals of other participants. According to the paper, “prosecutors’ failure to make so many of their charges stick has been read in some quarters as vindication of the Bundys, and of the idea that the federal government is so lacking in legitimacy that public property can be taken, used and destroyed without consequence.” However, “Payne’s sentence disrupts that story line.” It asserts that “the Malheur refuge takeover was an offense against every American, an offense against the far-sighted idea of natural resource conservation for the common good, and an offense against the Burns-Paiute tribe whose lands and artifacts were treated with recklessness and disrespect.”

### **Trump’s Tumultuous Cabinet, Ranked.**

In an analysis for the [Washington Post](#) (3/1, Bump), Philip Bump ranks the heads of the 15 cabinet departments “from most to least tumultuous.” The least tumultuous position is the Secretary of Defense, followed by the heads of the USDA, DHS, Labor, Transportation, Energy, Commerce, Education, Treasury, Interior, State, DOJ, HUD, VA, and HHS. Regarding Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Bump cites the controversies over Zinke travel, a contract granted by Puerto Rico “to a small company in Zinke’s small home town,” and the recent resignation of two

scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey “after Zinke asked that they share confidential data on oil reserves before it was made public.”

### Additional Reading.

- *The Public, Elected Officials Needs More Information On Secretary Zinke's Goals.* [Southwest Colorado Journal](#) (3/1).
- *PROGRESS: What Opening Up ANWR Means For Alaska's Energy Prospects.* [Anchorage \(AK\) Press](#) (3/1, Bradner).
- *Peg Howell Guest Column: The Future Of Our Coast Is In Your Hands.* [South Strand News \(SC\)](#) (3/1, Howell).
- *Botched Bison Management Needs Review.* [Bismarck \(ND\) Tribune](#) (3/2).
- *This Bill Won't Help Coal Communities, But Rolling Back Regulations Will.* [Daily Signal](#) (3/1, Loris).
- *Public Is Losing Its Voice On Management Of 'Public' Land.* [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (3/2, Thompson).

### Top National News

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#### GOP Furious, Investors “Shaken” As Trump Announces Steel, Aluminum Tariffs.

President Trump’s announcement that he is following through on a campaign promise to levy tariffs on aluminum and steel generated extensive – and mostly unfavorable – media coverage, including scathing reports on all three major network newscasts. Media analyses cast the move as risking an all-out trade war and threatening the health of a seemingly resurgent US economy. [Bloomberg News](#) (3/1, Chandra, Miller), for example, bemoans the fact that Trump’s announcement came “after data released Thursday morning showed recent tax cuts buoyed Americans’ spending power in January, unemployment claims fell last week to an almost five-decade low and factories expanded in February at the fastest rate since 2004.” Many reports also highlighted the sharp stock sell-off that followed the announcement, and noted that what little support there was for Trump’s move came from Democrats – as Republicans were quite vocal in their opposition. At any rate, [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/1, story 3, 2:20, Jackson) reported, Trump’s move “is no surprise,” as “he campaigned on it.”

[NBC News](#) (3/1) refers to a “GOP meltdown over Trump plan,” and reports “Republicans pounced” on the President’s proposal “in an unprecedented way.” [Roll Call](#) (3/1, Williams) similarly indicated the Republican reaction was “fast, furious and negative,” while [The Hill](#) (3/1, Needham) casts Trump as “defying” the GOP. The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Lynch, Paletta), in a similar analysis, remarks on the opposition to the move from “the business community, normally a reliable GOP ally.”

On the other hand, [Bloomberg News](#) (3/1, Wasson) reports, “some Democrats are applauding” Trump’s action, an “upside-down reaction” that “comes a day after Trump irked Republicans and pleased many Democrats by backing stricter gun-control measures.” Sen. Sherrod Brown said, “This welcome action is long overdue for shuttered steel plants across Ohio and steelworkers who live in fear that their jobs will be the next victims of Chinese cheating.” Sen. Ron Wyden, meanwhile, is quoted as saying, “I am pleased that the president recognizes the importance of addressing these challenges and finally intends to take action.”

[The Hill](#) (3/1, Samuels) reported that Sen. Bob Casey, up for reelection this fall, [lauded](#) Trump “for announcing plans to impose steep tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, saying it will help Pennsylvania workers.” Casey is quoted as tweeting, “It has taken the Administration far too long, but today’s announcement of an intention to act next week is a welcome step. When countries cheat on trade, Pennsylvania workers lose. I urge the Administration to follow through and to take aggressive measures to ensure our workers can compete on a level playing field.” The Hill added that Casey is bidding for another term “in a state Trump narrowly won in 2016.”

The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/1, story 4, 1:55, Brennan) noted Brown’s support for the tariffs, but went on to show GOP Sen. John Kennedy saying, “Once you start imposing tariffs, you don’t do it in a vacuum. Other countries respond.” Another Republican, Sen. Ben Sasse, “called the tariffs a ‘massive tax increase on American families. You’d expect a policy this bad from a leftist administration, not a supposedly Republican one.’” CBS showed Press Secretary Sarah Sanders retorting, “I don’t know that the President will or should ever apologize for protecting American workers, and certainly not to Sen. Sasse.” [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/1, story 3, 2:20,

Jackson) showed Sen. Orrin Hatch saying, "This is just going to be a huge tax on American citizens," and NBC reported that Speaker Ryan said "he hopes the President will consider the unintended consequences." [Reuters](#) (3/1, Holland, Gibson), meanwhile, quotes Sen. Pat Roberts as warning, "Every time you do this, you get a retaliation. Agriculture is the number one target. I think this is terribly counterproductive for the agriculture economy."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Lynch, Paletta) reports "investors appeared shaken by the news," with the Dow down "around 586 points, a loss of 2 percent, in early-afternoon trading before closing the day down 420 points." [Reuters](#) (3/1, Valetkevitch) reports the Dow "fell...1.68 percent, to 24,608.98, the S&P 500 .SPX lost 36.16 points, or 1.33 percent, to 2,677.67 and the Nasdaq Composite .IXIC dropped 92.45 points, or 1.27 percent, to 7,180.56." [Bloomberg News](#) (2/28, Walt, Mullen), the [New York Times](#) (3/1, Phillips) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/1, B1, Wursthorn), among other news outlets, devote stories to the stock numbers – which were noted across much of the reporting of Trump's decision. [Reuters](#) (3/1, Carey, Banerjee) reports that "shares of General Motors Co lost 3.97 percent, Ford Motor Co was down 3.0 percent and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles was down 2.8 percent."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (3/1, Spangler) recounts that "speaking to more than a dozen steel and aluminum executives at the White House, Trump said he would sign tariffs of 25% on imported steel and 10% on imported aluminum next week." Trump said the measure will be "for a long period of time," and he further told the executives, "We'll be signing it in. And you'll have protection for the first time in a long while and you're going to regrow your industries. That's all I'm asking." The [AP](#) (3/1, Thomas, Wiseman) further quotes Trump as saying, "What's been allowed to go on for decades is disgraceful. It's disgraceful. ... When it comes to a time when our country can't make aluminum and steel...you almost don't have much of a country."

[Breitbart](#) (3/1, Spiering) reports Trump also said, "People have no idea how badly our country has been treated by other countries by people representing us that didn't have a clue or if they did, then they should be ashamed of themselves. ... Because they have destroyed the steel industry," and "we're bringing it all back."

[NPR](#) (3/1, Ydstie, Schneider) reported "the decision follows a study by the Commerce Department that found that large amounts of steel and aluminum imports posed a threat to US national security." The finding "gives the White House the authority to limit imports by tariffs or other means."

The [Daily Caller](#) (3/1, Datoc) reports "the president hinted at his reasoning for the tariffs in a tweet earlier Thursday morning." [Wrote](#) Trump, "Our Steel and Aluminum industries (and many others) have been decimated by decades of unfair trade and bad policy with countries from around the world. We must not let our country, companies and workers be taken advantage of any longer. We want free, fair and SMART TRADE!"

The [Washington Times](#) (3/1, Boyer, Miller) notes that "at the meeting, US Steel Corp. CEO Dave Burritt said competing with foreign companies that use unfair trade practices was like playing 'the whack-a-mole game.'" Added Burritt, "We are not protectionists. We want a level playing field."

**Action On Tariffs Follows Fierce White House Debate.** The [AP](#) (3/1, Thomas, Wiseman) reports "the decision had been strenuously debated within the White House, with top officials such as economic adviser Gary Cohn and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis raising concerns." The penalties, on the other hand, "were pushed by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and White House trade adviser Peter Navarro, an economist who has favored taking aggressive action."

The [New York Times](#) (3/1, Swanson) also reports "advisers have been bitterly divided over how to proceed on the tariffs," but "in recent weeks, a group of White House advisers who advocate a tougher posture on trade has been in ascendance, including Robert Lighthizer, the country's top trade negotiator, and...Navarro, a trade skeptic who had been sidelined but is now in line for a promotion."

[Politico](#) (2/28, Restuccia, Behsudi) recounts that "shortly before he resigned amid domestic abuse allegations, White House staff secretary Rob Porter got into a heated argument about the tariffs with Navarro in the Oval Office in front of the president, according to a person familiar with the issue." However, "Porter's resignation removed a fierce opponent of the tariffs from the West Wing and revived the chaotic policy review process that defined the early weeks of Trump's presidency."

According to [Breitbart](#) (3/1, Spiering), "several White House officials tried to enact a frantic, last-ditch effort to stop Trump's decision on Thursday, leaking details of dysfunction and division in the White House to the media." But "Trump told reporters that he had made his decision."

Gloria Borger said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/1) that most of the President's advisers think the move is a "horrible idea and most were try to trying to convince him not to do it, with

some notable exceptions,” such as Navarro. The President “scheduled this very quickly and very hastily. It almost seems as if he was trying to do it without letting everybody inside the White House that he was trying to do it so he could get away with it. Was he doing it to change the subject from all of the news we have been dealing with lately? Did he just want to look decisive and effective? Maybe. But, the stock market plunged over 400 points. You have people inside the White House now scrambling because they are upset with what has occurred.”

Mike Allen of Axios said on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (3/1), “It was a surprise, and it was not just a surprise not just to the markets. It was a shock inside. I can’t overstate how unusual it is for White House aides, a couple hours before a big presidential event, to have no idea. This tells you how they think compared to how the President thinks. They were telling us he can’t do this, the paperwork isn’t done. The President has been saying he wants to do this. Axios has reported, in some meeting he said bring me my tariffs. This is a President getting what he wanted.”

Katie Pavlich of Townhall said on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (3/1), “The Administration is gambling on the idea that the ends will justify the means. They know it’s a big risk. History shows that tariffs aren’t always good for the United States, and they certainly aren’t good when it comes to putting taxes on our allies.”

**“Person Close To Cohn” Says Trade Decision Could Lead Him To Leave White House.** [Politico](#) (3/1, White, Restuccia) reports “one person close to Cohn, a former Goldman Sachs executive, said he wouldn’t be surprised if he eventually left the chaotic and deeply exhausting administration as a result of the decision.” Meanwhile, “a second person close to Cohn described it as a brutal blow that violated one of the NEC director’s core beliefs --that protectionism is economically backward and won’t lead to increased prosperity.”

**Media Analyses: Trump’s Course On Trade Will Hurt Consumers, Overall Economy.** [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/1, story 3, 2:20, Jackson) concluded last night that the tariffs mean “you could pay more for products made with steel and aluminum. ... How much more could you pay for a car or washing machine? Still unclear.” On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/1, story 7, 1:10, Muir), Rebecca Jarvis said “the primary concern” for investors is that “while this is helpful to US steel and aluminum companies, it also means that the cost for US manufacturers on those materials go up, and that could ultimately get passed along to consumers. ... Think of anything that involves a can: beer, soda. Think of building materials. All of those costs start to go up in the case of these tariffs.”

Deirdre Bolton of Fox Business Network said on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (3/1) that “potential trade wars also threaten American exporters. An American firm can lose access point blank to a foreign market or American goods are taxed so heavily in retaliation that lost money and lost jobs follow.”

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/1) blasts the move as a tax hike, and predicts it will hurt both the economy and Trump’s voters. The [Washington Post](#) (3/1) editorializes, “Race to the bottom, trade war: Call it what you will, the spiral will eventually harm everyone, the United States and its metal industries very much included.”

[CNN Money](#) (3/1, Gillespie) said “at the heart of the looming trade action is Trump’s campaign promise to create good-paying jobs in the United States, particularly in factories, by getting tough on trade.” However, “researchers...say automation is much more of a job-killer and the United States should focus more on job training than tariffs.”

Bob Bryan reports for [Business Insider](#) (3/1, Bryan) that “studies show that these types of moves typically result in a small boost for the industries and serious negative consequences for the broader US economy.” [Roll Call](#) (3/1, Ferguson) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/1, Nicholas, Schlesinger), among other news outlets, run similar accounts this morning.

[Reuters](#) (3/1, Seba, Gardner), meanwhile, reports the “US oil and gas industry on Thursday slammed...Trump’s plan,” saying “the move would kill energy jobs by raising costs for big infrastructure projects.” Reuters adds “officials at the nation’s top energy industry trade groups issued statements urging Trump to drop the idea, and a source familiar with Exxon Mobil’s investment plans said the tariff could lead the company to curtail an expansion of one of the country’s biggest oil refineries.” Said the API’s Jack Gerard, “These tariffs would undoubtedly raise costs for US businesses that rely heavily on steel and aluminum for the majority of their products – and ultimately consumers.”

**Europeans, Canadians, Mexicans, Chinese Express Outrage.** [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (3/1) reported that “the action is predominantly aimed at China, which is dumping cheap steel products into the US,” but the move “may affect America’s closest allies. Canada declared any tariff against steel would be unacceptable. Britain said we are particularly concerned by any measures



that would impact the UK steel and aluminum industries.” Richard Quest reported on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (3/1) that “we’ve heard from the Brits, the Canadians...and we’ve heard from the Mexicans as well. They are all saying the same things: ‘if you introduce these tariffs, we will retaliate.’ That’s what you’ve seen in the market today.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/28, Lynch, Paletta) reports that “in a further slap at China, Trump announced the tariffs even as a top Chinese economic official was in Washington for talks aimed at forestalling a possible trade war.” Liu He, who is “one of Chinese President Xi Jinping’s closest aides, is scheduled to meet with senior administration officials in a bid to restart a direct economic dialogue that lagged last year.” China’s Foreign Ministry “repeated its government’s objections,” saying, “The United States is disregarding the rules of the WTO, and China is dissatisfied with this.”

[Reuters](#) (3/1) reports European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker also said, “We will not sit idly while our industry is hit with unfair measures that put thousands of European jobs at risk ... The EU will react firmly and commensurately to defend our interests.” [Reuters](#) (3/1) notes that the German Steel Association also reacted to the news, saying in a statement, “The US is setting up a customs barrier to protect itself from steel imports from all over the world. This measure clearly violates the rules of the World Trade Organization.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/1, Bochove, Wingrove, Oworm) says “Canada is vowing to retaliate.” Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland said, “We will always stand up for Canadian workers and Canadian businesses,” and “should restrictions be imposed on Canadian steel and aluminum products, Canada will take responsive measures to defend its trade interests and workers.”

[Reuters](#) (3/1, Schnurr, Hopkins) reports Freeland, however, “did not give details and Canadian officials were not immediately available for comment.”

David Swerdlick of the Washington Post said on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (3/1), “You have a situation here where President Trump has been consistent on this. He campaigned saying he wouldn’t be afraid to use tariffs. ... Back in November the US Trade Commission started looking into this. Now they are taking action. The problem is not just that you could tank the stock market like what happened today but that you’re going to antagonize China, a country we are working with or against on a whole bunch of fronts just for the slim possibility that you’re going to slightly shift the trade balance.”

***Morning Consult Poll: 59% Back Tariffs On Chinese Steel And Aluminum.*** [Breitbart](#) (3/1, Binder) reports that “in a [Morning Consult](#) poll, 59 percent of Americans say it is ‘important’ that...Trump place tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, specifically from China, showing a wide range of support for the White House’s economic nationalist agenda.” Breitbart adds that “about 66 percent of voters said shrinking America’s more than \$375 billion trade deficit with China was key, as well as 56 percent who said they wanted to see the Trump administration challenge China’s leaders on intellectual property protection, and 44 percent who said they want China labeled as a currency manipulator.”

### **NRA Lobbyist Suggests Trump Has Backed Off Support For Gun Control.**

While President Trump expressed optimism Thursday that a bill “should emerge” from Wednesday’s White House meeting on school safety and media coverage of Trump’s comments in the wake of the Florida school shooting highlight Trump’s apparent agreement with some Democratic ideas, a tweet late Thursday from the NRA’s chief lobbyist suggested that Trump may have backed away from that support.

The [New York Times](#) (3/1, Shear, Stolberg, Kaplan) reports that Chris Cox, the NRA’s top lobbyist claimed Thursday night that Trump “had retreated from his surprising support a day earlier for gun control measures after a meeting with N.R.A. officials and Vice President Mike Pence in the Oval Office.” In a [tweet](#) posted just after 9 p.m., Cox wrote that he met with Trump and Pence and added that “we all want safe schools, mental health reform and to keep guns away from dangerous people. POTUS & VPOTUS support the Second Amendment, support strong due process and don’t want gun control. #NRA #MAGA.” About an hour later, Trump [tweeted](#), “Good (Great) meeting in the Oval Office tonight with the NRA!” The Times says the tweets “suggest that it may have taken the gun rights group only about 24 hours to persuade the president to back away from the positions he took embracing Democratic gun control measures” during a meeting with lawmakers on Wednesday.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/1, Chaitin) says Trump’s “enthusiastic” tweet came one day after he “roiled gun rights advocates when he suggested illegally taking away guns from dangerous people.” Similarly, the [New York Post](#) (3/1, Tacopino) says the tweet came “one day after Trump told lawmakers to take people’s guns away and ‘go through due process second.’”

The [Washington Times](#) (3/1, Morton) says Cox "promptly retweeted the president."

[Politico](#) (3/1, Nelson) reports that in a tweet earlier Thursday, Trump "declar[ed] that 'a bill should emerge' from the conversations that have begun in the wake" of the Florida school shooting. Trump [tweeted](#), "Many ideas, some good & some not so good, emerged from our bipartisan meeting on school safety yesterday at the White House. ... Background Checks a big part of conversation. Gun free zones are proven targets of killers. After many years, a bill should emerge. Respect 2nd Amendment!"

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/1, story 6, 2:55, Muir) reported that during his White House meeting with lawmakers Wednesday, President Trump "agree[d] with the Democrats in the room on several ideas, including universal background checks." However, ABC (Karl) added that some of Trump's "most reliable Republican friends in Congress said point blank they couldn't support some of the ideas he embraced." The [New York Times](#) (3/1, Qiu) examines "the claims made" by lawmakers during Wednesday's meeting "that may have strayed from the facts or otherwise require some additional context."

The [AP](#) (3/1, Mascaro, Daly, Lucey) describes Republicans as cautious, while other reports put Republicans' reaction in stronger terms. For example, [The Hill](#) (3/1, Zanona) says House conservatives were "baffled" by Trump's "support for a string of Democratic-backed gun control ideas, with some lawmakers even questioning how committed he is to protecting the Second Amendment," and [Politico](#) (3/1, Everett, Bade) says Trump "threw decades of party orthodoxy on gun rights out the window" and the response "among congressional Republicans was a mix of disbelief, denial and outrage."

Sen. Ben Sasse said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/1), "Here is what America means. It means that we believe rights come to us from God via nature and government exists to secure and protect our rights. Government doesn't give us rights. When you say something like we'll take the guns first, we'll grab the guns first and later we will have a due process conversation, what that means is government's first and hopefully you have a bureaucrat you trust to decide what rights you have. That's not how America works."

Rep. Jodey Arrington said on [Fox News' Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (3/1) that Trump is "going down that slippery slope, that knee-jerk reaction we are accustomed to whether you have mass shootings and I would oppose President Obama and I would oppose President Trump and any President that negotiates away what is a fundamental right and quite frankly it's a right that if it were not exercised by our founding patriots, we wouldn't have the rest of our rights and we wouldn't have our independence."

Rep. Adam Kinzinger, asked on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (3/1) about the President's proposal to raise the age to buy a firearm to 21, said, "I think it definitely for the AR-15 it should be 21. I'm open to the question of shotguns and things because I think there's plenty of reasons to have a shotgun for hunting." Asked about expanding background checks, Kinzinger said, "Here's my question. The answer in this is going to be in the details. Now if my dad wants to sell me his pistol, does he have to put me through a federal background check. That is a question. But, is there are areas where people are buying guns and not having background checks, I am definitely open to closing that."

Rep. Sean Duffy said on [Fox News Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (3/1), "I think there is a whole bunch of issues taking place outside of guns. I think our kids in America are angry. They are being raised in single family homes without fathers. ... There is a whole slew of issues in America that we didn't have 40 years ago. We have to address the root cause of what is bringing kids to be so angry and detached."

Meanwhile, [Roll Call](#) (3/1, Connolly) reports that Democrats "pressured the president to keep his word." Sen. Chris Murphy "urged the administration to follow through on the president's words Wednesday," saying, "The White House can now launch a lobbying campaign to get universal background checks passed, as the president promised in this meeting, or they can sit and do nothing." The [Washington Times](#) (3/1, Sherfinski) reports that Senate Democrats said Thursday that "any bill must expand background checks and allow court-ordered gun confiscations" and "demand[ed] a vote on a semi-automatic rifle ban – though they said that is not a deal-breaker if it doesn't become law." Minority Leader Schumer said his caucus "is prepared to provide a 'very large' number of votes for those priorities."

Sen. Amy Klobuchar said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (3/1), "My colleagues that were in the meeting about Dreamers left there and were ebullient and thought something was going to get done and we were obviously undermined the last day after a group of Democrats, Republicans...had come together with a common sense idea about how to make sure those kids could stay in the country and we had border security." Klobuchar added that "one difference" now



is that "it was a very clear focus on universal background check. He didn't say it once or twice. He said it like ten times and the American people are focused on this right now. ... For him to say that to the American people and turn back on that, I think that would be something like we've never seen in terms of a betrayal. So, it is on him now not only to keep up that focus, but also to get the members of his own party to get behind it."

Rep. Stephanie Murphy said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (3/1), "I was really heartened by what the President said and some of the commitments that he made to see this through to the end." Murphy added that this "might be a Nixon goes to China moment for Trump. He might be the only President who can help us advance some commonsense gun safety measures because...nobody believes he's trying to take away anybody's guns."

Joe Scarborough writes in the [Washington Post](#) (3/1) that Trump may "decide that this is the time for real progress on common-sense gun-safety legislation" because "it's the right thing to do" or because "it's the smart thing to do. But if he chooses instead to let his party continue to languish in fear, Republicans will just be giving Americans one more reason to vote them out of power – and relegate Trumpism to the ash heap of history."

***Trump's Openness To Gun Legislation Sets Off Scramble In Senate.*** [Politico](#) (3/1, Schor) says Trump's "unexpected openness to expansive gun control measures set off a scramble in the Senate Thursday, with lawmakers in both parties laying out a raft of competing proposals and jockeying for position." The "flurry of action suggests Trump's wild-card support Wednesday for proposals to expand background checks and raise the age limit for certain rifle purchases has caused plenty of political ripples — if not yet a wave big enough to unite lawmakers behind a single approach."

Sen. Pat Toomey said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (3/1) that he and Sen. Joe Manchin "are definitely going to move forward if we can. We are actively soliciting support for our bill. There are several Republican senators who voted against it in the 2013 who have told me they are reconsidering so I am hopeful about that. I think the President's very aggressive support for expanding background checks is encouraging." Toomey was asked on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (3/1) about the President's comment that he is afraid of the NRA. Toomey said, "Let's think about how ridiculous that is. I'm the guy that wrote the bill that the NRA opposed. The Manchin-Toomey legislation was strongly opposed by the NRA. They didn't endorse me in my re-election. They haven't given me a dime since 2010. I'm the guy that stood up to the NRA among Republicans."

Counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (3/1), "The President just told me last night, we had a conversation late last night about yesterday's session. He told me last night that there are elements of the Toomey-Manchin bill and there are elements of the Cornyn-Murphy bill he is supportive of and he has made that very clear. I think that itself shows some bipartisan impulses, but he also is very respectful of the Second Amendment and the law-abiding citizens who own and possess their firearms in a peaceful way and that they have their rights also and he knows that."

NRA spokeswoman Dana Loesch said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (3/1), "I listened to that discussion of Manchin-Toomey yesterday. Toomey himself even said that this bill would not have done anything to prevented this atrocity. It simply wouldn't have. When you talk about the background check system and you talk about keeping firearms out of the hand of those mentally unstable, therefore danger to themselves or others, this is something we're all in agreement on, which is why it is inconceivable to millions of Americans families why they're the ones being punished for failures of government. We all have to realize the firearm did not walk itself in the school. It was allowed to after 45 missed calls."

***Pelosi Optimistic About Comprehensive Gun Legislation Without Assault Weapons Ban.*** The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/1) reports that House Minority Leader Pelosi expressed optimism that "Congress can pass comprehensive gun legislation, but said she doesn't expect an assault weapons ban to be part of such a measure." Speaking at her weekly news conference, Pelosi said, "It might not be [an] assault weapon ban, but practically anything short of that is what we would expect. ... That might take longer. We need to have the best package we can get done now."

***Trump To Discuss Violent Video Games With Industry Reps Next Week.*** The [New York Post](#) (3/1, Moore) reports that the President will meet next week "with members of the video game industry next week after he suggested the games and movies should be rated for violent content during a meeting with bipartisan lawmakers." Press secretary Sarah Sanders said of the gun control issue, "The president has met with a number of stakeholders. ... Next week he'll also be meeting with members of the video game industry to see what they can do on that front. ... This is going to be an ongoing process and something we don't expect to happen overnight, but

something we'll continue to be engaged in."

***Hundreds Of School Districts Already Arming Teachers.*** In the wake of President Trump's suggestion that teachers be trained to carry firearms, the [New York Times](#) (3/1, Green, Fernandez) reports that "hundreds of school districts across the country, most of them small and rural, already have."

[Breitbart](#) (3/1, Hope) reports that the Fayetteville Independent School District this week "joined nearly 200 other Texas school districts in arming their employees to protect students under a 'Guardian' program." Superintendent Jeff Harvey "told KVUE the goal of the program was not to create vigilante teachers," and said the guardians are "a protection for each and every student in this school district." Harvey added, "We have numerous folks on staff that have military backgrounds. ... Everyone here believes in that sense of protectiveness of their kids. Each one of these kids is ours. We treat them like they're our own and we want to make sure we're prepared to do whatever it takes to protect them."

In a separate story, [Breitbart](#) (3/1, Hawkins) reports that the Pike County, Kentucky School Board has "voted to work with the Pike County Sheriff's Office to train and arm teachers for school safety." According to Kentucky.com, the vote was "unanimous" in favor of armed teachers.

***After Voicing Support For Gun Control, Rubio Offers "Less Controversial" Measure.*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/1, Sullivan) reports that while Sen. Marco Rubio "endorsed raising the age requirement for buying a rifle from 18 to 21 and voiced openness to placing limits on the size of ammunition magazines" eight days ago, on Thursday, when he "unveiled his plan to address gun violence, he did not outline any specific plans on these very divisive fronts." Instead, he "embraced a series of other, less controversial measures" including "freeing up more federal dollars to beef up school security and create 'crisis interventions teams'; creating gun violence restraining orders; pressing school districts to promptly alert law enforcement to dangerous behavior; passing a bipartisan bill to tighten the National Instant Background Check System; and mandating the FBI notify states when a prohibited person tries to buy a gun and fails the requisite background check."

The [Miami Herald](#) (3/1, Daugherty, Smiley) says Rubio argued on the Senate floor "that local law enforcement and school officials could have prevented the massacre in Parkland and urged Congress to pass narrowly tailored bills on school safety and mental health that have support from both parties," but he "barely mentioned guns."

***FCC Chairman Turns Down NRA Award.*** [Politico](#) (3/1, McGill) reports that FCC Chairman Pai on Thursday declined "an NRA gun award he received at the Conservative Political Action Conference last week, citing the advice of ethics officials at his agency." An NRA executive named Pai "the Charlton Heston Courage Under Fire Award recipient at CPAC for his efforts to repeal the Obama-era net neutrality rules," but Pai, "in letters sent Thursday to the NRA and to the American Conservative Union, which puts on the conference, noted he was 'surprised' by the award and turned down the gun."

***WTimes Analysis: NRA Remains One Of Most Successful Lobbying Groups.*** The [Washington Times](#) (3/1, Varney) reports that while NRA "has become politically toxic in Washington," the "electoral scorecard shows that the NRA represents many people and is effective." In terms of "money and candidates, the NRA ranks among the most successful lobbying groups." NRA-backed candidates "prevailed in 73.3 percent of the 2016 races where the NRA picked sides, and when judged by spending, 94.4 percent of the organization's political money supported successful candidates."

***Georgia Senate Punishes Delta Over NRA Stance.*** The [New York Times](#) (3/1, Fausset) reports that the Georgia Senate on Thursday approved a measure "that stripped out a tax break proposal highly coveted by Delta Air Lines – the most stinging punishment that America's pro-gun forces have leveled so far on one of the many corporations recalibrating their positions on firearms after the Florida high school massacre." The \$50 million sales tax exemption on jet fuel "had been included in a broader tax-relief bill," but "a number of Georgia Republicans, including Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, removed the perk as retribution for Delta's decision to end a promotional discount for members of the National Rifle Association."

***Kroger Raises Age For Gun Purchases At Fred Meyer Stores To 21.*** [USA Today](#) (3/1, Bomey) reports that Kroger announced Thursday that it is "banning gun sales at its Fred Meyer stores to anyone younger than 21." According to Kroger, the decision came "in response to the tragic events in Parkland and elsewhere."

***Former FBI Agents Say FBI Mishandled Tips On Florida School Shooter.*** The [Miami Herald](#) (3/1, Gordon, Weaver) reports that "many former FBI agents and law enforcement experts" believe the FBI "failed at basic detective work — and in multiple ways" before the Florida school

shooting. The “most alarming warning” not only suggested that Nikolas Cruz “was a likely school shooter but that he also could be influenced by the Islamic terror group ISIS, both glaring red flags for national security.” However, “a specialist and supervisor at the FBI’s civilian call center in West Virginia didn’t pass the warning on to field agents in South Florida.”

***Contrary To Training, BSO Captain Told Deputies To Form Perimeter Around Parkland Shooting.***

The [Miami Herald](#) (3/1, DeMarzo, Nehamas) reports that Capt. Jan Jordan, the Broward Sheriff’s Office captain “who initially took charge of the chaotic scene at a Parkland high school...told deputies to form a perimeter around the deadly scene – which they did instead of going in to confront the shooter, according to a partial BSO dispatch log obtained by the Miami Herald.” Sheriff Scott Israel “has said BSO training and nationwide active-shooter procedure call for armed law enforcement officers to confront shooters immediately rather than secure a scene.” The Herald says the log “raises fresh questions about the department’s handling of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on Feb. 14.”

***Couples Carry Assault-Style Rifles As They Exchange Vows In “Pro-Gun” Church.*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/1, Phillips) reports that “dozens of couples” wearing crowns and carrying “assault-style rifles” went “to a pro-gun Pennsylvania church for a commitment ceremony on Wednesday.” The couples “are worshipers at the World Peace and Unification Sanctuary, also known as the Sanctuary Church” in Newfoundland, Pennsylvania. Church leader Hyung Jin Moon “called on his followers to bring unloaded rifles to the ceremony.”

***WPost Voices Support For “Red Flag” Laws.*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/1) argues that “whether or not Congress adds muscle to gun laws,” states “need not be impotent in the face of credible threats.” The Post voices support for “red-flag” laws that “empower relatives and close friends, as well as law enforcement officers, to ask judges to issue ‘gun violence restraining orders,’” arguing that if Florida had such a law, “it’s possible that the Parkland rampage could have been averted.”

**Trump Touts Manufacturing Growth, 49-Year Low In Jobless Claims.**

In a pair of tweets Thursday evening, President Trump touted positive economic news, writing in [one](#), “Jobless claims at a 49 year low!” and in [another](#), “Manufacturing growing at the fastest pace in almost two decades!” [Breitbart](#) (3/1, Carney) reports that new unemployment claims “fell to their lowest level since 1969 last week.” While economists anticipated “226,000 new jobless claims, a rise over the previous week,” claims “unexpectedly fell by 10,000 to 210,000 in the week ending on February 24.”

***Powell Offers Upbeat View Of Economy.*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/1, Timiraos) reports that in two days of congressional testimony this week, Fed Chairman Powell offered an upbeat assessment of the economy and left open the possibility of four quarter-point interest rate increases in 2018.

**EPA Begins Dismantling Obama Methane Rules.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/1, Siciliano) reports the EPA on Thursday “announced two piecemeal actions” aimed at reducing “costs and regulatory ‘burdens’ imposed on the oil and natural gas industry by the Obama administration’s methane emission rules.” The agency said the two actions would mitigate “‘significant and immediate compliance concerns’ for the industry, while reducing ‘burdens’ on state environmental agencies and saving millions of dollars in compliance costs.” Recently appointed EPA air pollution chief Bill Wehrum said, “The technical amendments to the 2016 oil and gas [new source rule] are meant to alleviate targeted regulatory compliance issues faced by affected sources. While this action addresses an immediate need, it does not deter the ongoing work at the agency to assess the 2016 rule as a whole, including whether it is prudent or necessary to directly regulate methane.”

***Wyoming Fights Methane Rule, Again.*** The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (3/1, Richards) reports that “Wyoming is trying to bring the methane rule fight back to federal court in the Cowboy State with the aim of scrapping the regulations until the Interior Department gives the country new ones.” Wyoming and “other industry states say compliance is unfair and the rule should be tabled until the Interior is finished with its revision process.” The state counsel argued in court documents filed Wednesday, “Neither the regulated community nor the BLM is capable of switching on compliance with the Waste Prevention Rule overnight.”

**EPA Moves To Roll Back Further Clean Air, Water Rules.**

The [AP](#) (3/1, Biesecker, Brown) reports the EPA announced Thursday “it is rewriting Obama-era rules governing pollution from oil and gas operations and coal ash dumps, moves that opponents

say will significantly weaken protections for human health and the environment.” The proposed changes are “the latest in series of actions taken over the last year to roll back regulations opposed by the fossil-fuel industry” and the EPA argues “the revisions would save electric utilities \$100 million per year in compliance costs, while oil and gas operators would reap up to \$16 million in benefits by 2035.” However, opponents and environmental advocates expect the revisions to “lead to dirtier air and water.” In a statement, EPA Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation Bill Wehrum said the changes will “provide regulatory certainty to one of the largest sectors of the American economy and avoid unnecessary compliance costs to both covered entities and the states.”

***Proposed Changes To EPA rule Would Give States More Power To Manage Toxic Coal Ash.***

According to the [Washington Post](#) (3/1, Dennis, Eilperin), the EPA proposed “significant” updates to “an Obama-era initiative to regulate coal ash waste” that will give “states and utilities more latitude in how they dispose of the potentially toxic substance.” The Post reports that the “proposal includes more than a dozen suggested changes regarding the way coal ash is stored at more than 400 coal-fired power plants around the country, namely that it would allow ‘alternative performance standards’ for state and federally permitted facilities.”

**Corporate America Seen Taking On Issues The Government Won’t.**

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/1, Campbell, Simmons) reports on a trend of US companies “pressured to act on controversial social and political issues where government won’t.” The trend is “currently manifested by firms cutting ties to the National Rifle Association and efforts by large investors to reduce exposure to gun-makers,” but continues moving forward “on issues that Washington has failed to tackle,” such as benefits for working mothers, climate change, or support for politically vulnerable groups.” Many corporate pledges are as much marketing as substance” and “few believe that voluntary actions taken by businesses can substitute for meaningful government action,” Bloomberg reports, noting a lack of consistency across the economy as just one tobacco firm is among 609 companies that score highly for LGBT protections.

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**Editorial Wrap-Up**

**New York Times.**

***“Intrigue In The House Of Trump.”*** In the first part of an editorial series on “nepotism in the White House,” the [New York Times](#) (3/1) says that one of the President’s “most disturbing departures from tradition was his appointment of close relatives to positions at the very apex of government power,” and the “consequences of that ethical break” are now being seen. The Times argues that Trump’s “behavior is a warning that ethical traditions and culture are not enough” and calls on lawmakers to “harden some of these norms into law, to safeguard the executive branch and the public trust from future presidents eager to use America’s highest office to benefit their families.”

***“Jared Kushner Flames Out.”*** In the second part of an editorial series on “nepotism” in the White House, the [New York Times](#) (3/1, Board) says that while Trump “voices high praise for [Jared] Kushner’s talent, the fact that he’s family is qualification enough for a president obsessed with close-lipped loyalty and uninterested in policy unless it benefits himself.” The Times argues that Kushner’s “paltry” accomplishments in one year demonstrate “why, from the nation’s founding to the present day, the architects of American democracy have tried so mightily to restrict the hiring of presidential relatives.” The Times adds that if Congress would “require that presidential appointees across the federal government possess relevant credentials and experience, that they meet enforceable performance metrics, and...that they can pass a background check,” it would “prove [Kushner’s] only real achievement.”

***“Ivanka Trump: Brand Building At The White House.”*** In the third part of an editorial series on “nepotism in the White House,” the [New York Times](#) (3/1, Board) says that before President Trump no American president “has given such an underqualified son or daughter a White House post, and [Ivanka] Trump’s tenure demonstrates why.” The Times says that “no policymaker truly committed to the agenda Ms. Trump espouses would have joined this administration. No presidential adviser with the values she claims would still be working for a president so determined to lay waste to them.” The Times asks why she remains in the Administration and says the answers “could only be family allegiance, personal gain, or plans – wildly optimistic plans, in light of the F.B.I. noose tightening around this White House – for a dynastic political career,” which are “precisely what the founders condemned as nepotism’s dangers to

democracy.”

**“No Matter The Verdict, Corruption Trial Taints Cuomo.”** The [New York Times](#) (3/1) argues in an editorial that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo would benefit from forgoing suspicious campaign donations in order to demonstrate that “he’s sticking to both the spirit of the rules and his own ethics agenda.” Cuomo’s former aide and family friend Joseph Percoco is on trial for charges of accepting bribes, and Cuomo has “repeatedly urged the Legislature to close” a campaign finance loophole which he himself has used “to plow many hundreds of thousands of dollars from corporate donors into a campaign strongbox containing more than \$30 million.” The Times argues that to end such actions would be what is “in some circles...called walking the walk.”

### **Washington Post.**

**“Trump’s Tariffs Will Hurt All Americans.”** The [Washington Post](#) (3/1) editorializes, “Race to the bottom, trade war: Call it what you will, the spiral will eventually harm everyone, the United States and its metal industries very much included.”

**“There’s Something States Can Do About Gun Violence: ‘Red-Flag’ Laws.”** In an editorial the [Washington Post](#) (3/1) argues that “whether or not Congress adds muscle to gun laws,” states “need not be impotent in the face of credible threats.” The Post voices support for “red-flag” laws that “empower relatives and close friends, as well as law enforcement officers, to ask judges to issue ‘gun violence restraining orders,’” arguing that if Florida had such a law, “it’s possible that the Parkland rampage could have been averted.”

**“Children Are Killed For Insurance Money. Maryland Is Doing Something About It.”** The [Washington Post](#) (3/1) writes that legislation in the Maryland House and Senate requiring insurance companies “to tighten underwriting standards and procedures before writing life insurance policies on children” is a positive step toward guarding “against fraud and evil intent” around buying insurance on a child’s life. The Post cites the case of 15-month-old Prince McLeod Rams, who was murdered “by a father who had secretly and fraudulently obtained more than \$500,000 in life insurance on the boy.” The editors “would have preferred even stricter requirements,” and urge states like Virginia to follow suit.

### **Wall Street Journal.**

**“Trump’s Tariff Folly.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/1) blasts President Trump’s decision to impose tariffs on steel and aluminum as a tax hike, and predicts it will hurt both the economy and Trump’s voters.

**“A Shady Joint-Employer Ambush.”** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/1) criticizes National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Inspector General David Berry for his investigation into Board member Bill Emanuel for a conflict-of-interest following the NLRB’s decision to reverse an Obama-era standard that contractors had “indirect control” over their subcontractors’ employees. The Journal argues that Berry’s case against Emanuel was off-track, because Emanuel’s former employer was not directly involved in the case from which Berry argues he should have recused himself. The Journal also asserts that finding such a conflict-of-interest would exclude too great a number of decision-makers from many cases, and sets a double standard by not investigating Obama NLRB appointee Craig Becker, who participated in cases involving his former employer. The Journal says these actions should prompt the Senate to take up bipartisan legislation passed in the House last year setting a “direct-control” standard for subcontractors.

**“South Africa’s Economic Peril.”** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/1) editorializes that the South African National Assembly’s vote on Tuesday that will begin amending the constitution to allow land expropriation without compensation is disappointing. The editors argue that the move will perpetuate failing economic policies. The government is also claiming that expropriation would help overcome apartheid-era land tenure discrimination, but survey data show that these issues are largely resolved.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Trump To Impose Steep Aluminum And Steel Tariffs](#)

[Boom In Share Buybacks Renews Question Of Who Wins From Tax Cuts](#)

[China, Finally, Clamps Down On North Korea Trade—And The Impact Is Stinging](#)



## [Turmoil On Madison Avenue As Marketers Push For Change](#)

### ***New York Times:***

[Trump To Impose Sweeping Steel And Aluminum Tariffs](#)  
[Trump's Chaos Theory For The Oval Office Is Taking Its Toll](#)  
[Putin's "Invincible" Missile Is Aimed At US Vulnerabilities](#)  
[Trump Wants To Arm Teachers. These Schools Already Do.](#)  
[Trump Targets MS-13, A Violent Menace, If Not The One He Portrays](#)  
[Alberto Carvalho Backs Out Of New York City Schools Job](#)

### ***Washington Post:***

[Tough Talk From Russia](#)  
[Relations With US At Worst Point Since Cold War](#)  
[Trump Draws His Line On Trade](#)  
[Hundreds Say Renowned Teacher Harassed Girls](#)  
[24 Hours Of Chaos Leave Legislators, Aides Reeling](#)

### ***Financial Times:***

[Russia To Deploy "Unstoppable" Nuclear Weapons Says Putin](#)  
[Donald Trump To Slap 25% Tariff On Steel Imports](#)  
[Asian Bike-Sharing Companies Find Road Is Tougher In Europe](#)  
[Social Media Faces EU "1-Hour Rule" On Taking Down Terror Content](#)

### ***Washington Times:***

[Trump To Slap Tariffs On Steel, Aluminum](#)  
[Liberal Causes, Trump-Bashing To Pull Spotlight From Hollywood Scandals At Oscars](#)  
[NRA Spends Big — And Gets Its Money's Worth At Ballot Box](#)  
[Democrats Demand Bill With Expanded Background Checks, Gun Confiscations](#)  
[Anti-Establishment Five-Star Movement Set To Upend Italian Politics](#)  
[In A Hemisphere Of Crises, Low-Profile OAS Faces "Irrelevancy Trap"](#)

### ***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Severe Weather-West Coast; Kushner Controversy; H.R. McMaster-Possible Resignation; Russia-Putin; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Trump-Trade Tariffs; Trump Cabinet-Spending Controversy; Virginia-Family Murder; Chicago Traffic Accident; Dallas House Explosion; Cooking Hardware Recall; Academy Awards.

**CBS:** Severe Weather; Severe Weather-Travel Disruption; Severe Weather-West Coast; Trump-Trade Tariffs; Trump Family Threat-Arrested; Russia-Putin; ISIS Threats; WV-Teachers Strike; Syrian Civil War; Universal Flu Vaccine Development; Equifax Security Breach; EPA Secretary-Spending Controversy; Nat Geo Photographer.

**NBC:** Russia-Putin; Putin Interview; Trump-Trade Tariffs; White House Staff Turmoil; Severe Weather; Wells Fargo-Whistle Blower; Opioid Epidemic; Online Security Tips; WV-Teachers Strike; Cooking Hardware Recall; Athlete-Family Reunion; NBA Player.

### ***Network TV At A Glance:***

Severe Weather – 8 minutes, 20 seconds  
White House Staff Turmoil – 7 minutes, 30 seconds  
Russia-Putin – 6 minutes, 55 seconds  
Trump-Trade Tariffs – 5 minutes, 25 seconds

### ***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Trump-Trade Tariffs; Wall Street News; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Russia-Putin; Weinstein Company Merger.

**CBS:** Trump-Trade Tariffs; Russia-Putin; Severe Weather; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Severe Weather; Trump-Trade Tariffs; Suspicious Death Investigation.

**NPR:** Trump-Trade Tariffs; Florida Shooting-Gun Control; FBI-Russia NRA Ties; Pulse Night Club Widow Trial; Wall Street News.

## **Washington Schedule**

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## Today's Events In Washington.

### White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Attends the funeral of the Reverend Billy Graham; hosts a roundtable with Republican National Committee; delivers remarks at the Republican National Committee Spring Donor Retreat Dinner.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Attends the funeral of the Reverend Billy Graham; speaks at America First Policies event.

**US Senate:** No schedule announced.

**US House:** No votes scheduled.

**Other:** 9:00 AM Hudson Institute discussion on 'Reuniting Ukraine through International Cooperation' – 'Reuniting Ukraine through International Cooperation: Options in Donbas' Hudson Institute discussion, on a new paper from Center on International Cooperation Non-Resident Fellow Richard Gowan, 'Can the United Nations Unite Ukraine?', which looks at the various ways by which an eventual peacekeeping mission in Ukraine might come about and discusses options that might appeal to all parties in the conflict. Panelists include Gowan, U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations Amb. Kurt Volker, and Baker McKenzie Senior Associate Lyndon Allin Location: Hudson Institute, 1201 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.hudson.org> <https://twitter.com/HudsonInstitute>

9:30 AM DNC Rules and Bylaws Committee meeting continues – Democratic National Committee Rules and Bylaws Committee meeting, day two, with agenda including a review of the Unity Reform Commission report and other party business Location: W Hotel Washington DC, 515 15th St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.democrats.org/> <https://twitter.com/TheDemocrats>

Students For Liberty Liberty Con – Students For Liberty Liberty Con, with speakers including Republican Rep. Justin Amash, Forbes Media Editor-in-Chief Steve Forbes, ACLU President Susan Herman, Thurgood Marshall College Fund President and CEO Johnny Taylor, Whole Foods Co-founder and CEO John Mackey, Euro Pacific Capital President and CEO Peter Schiff, Foundation for Economic Education President Lawrence Reed, and former Estonian President Mart Laar Location: Washington Marriott Wardman Park, 2660 Woodley Road Northwest, Washington, DC [www.libertycon.com](http://www.libertycon.com) <https://twitter.com/sfliberty>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Stephen Colbert:** "Now, I'm no economist, so I can't say whether this tariff is good or bad, but I'm guessing bad because since Trump announced it, the Dow dropped more than 500 points. Yes, it sunk like an anchor made of solid, American steel."

**Stephen Colbert:** "Rumor has it that the White House already has McMaster's replacement picked out: Stephen Biegun, who currently serves as Vice President for the Ford Motor Company. So they may be losing a three-star general with a Purple Heart, but the new guy's a winner of the JD Power Award for best mid-sized sedan three years in a row!"

**Stephen Colbert:** "Trump has been angry ever since Sessions recused himself from the Russia investigation, and today we learned that Robert Mueller is examining Trump's apparent efforts to oust Sessions last July, which is shocking. There's still someone in the White House who was there since last July?"

**James Corden:** "More details have emerged after White House Communications Director Hope Hicks suddenly resigned yesterday. Apparently after Hope Hicks told Congress that she lied on his behalf, the President was so furious he berated her and demanded that Hicks explain how she could be so stupid. To which Hope Hicks replied, 'You first.'"

**James Corden:** "According to a new article, First Lady Melania Trump was able to come to the United States in 2001 after she got her green card through a program designed for people specifically with, quote, 'extraordinary ability.' Now many people are questioning this. And I was going to say, she has put up with Donald Trump for 17 years. If that is not extraordinary, I don't know what is."

**Trevor Noah:** "Donald Trump attacked his own party for being scared of the NRA. I did not see



that coming. That was the craziest twist since the end of 'The Usual Suspects.'"

**Trevor Noah:** "I guess yesterday some people on the left got a glimpse of why Trump's people love him so much. He wants to take action, and he's not going to let anything stop him. And people on the right got a glimpse of why people are terrified of Trump on the left. He wants to take action, and he's not going to let anything stop him."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "White House Communications Director Hope Hicks is leaving the White House. Hicks says she wants to move on to a job that's a little less stressful like heart surgeon or air traffic controller. Actually, Hicks said that she resigned to pursue other opportunities. Pretty tough job market out there. She had to compete against all those other unemployed Trump communications directors."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "Meanwhile, the last communications director, Anthony Scaramucci, says that morale at the White House is terrible. Seriously, he was there for 10 days. He's like a guy who spends a semester in England, comes back with a British accent."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "I read that Trump actually keeps a list of anyone who has ever criticized him. Even has a name for that list: the US Census."

**Seth Meyers:** "President Trump is planning to meet next week with members of the video game industry as part of the discussion over school safety. He's also very interested in taking a look at Mario's immigration papers."

**Seth Meyers:** [Referring to President Trump's comments on gun safety yesterday] "Republicans got their dream President, and now he's just blurting out their worst nightmares. We're like a week away from Trump driving up to the White House in a Prius blasting the Hamilton soundtrack and wearing a t-shirt that says #Resist."

**Conan O'Brien:** "Oprah said she asked God for a sign on whether or not she should run for President, but she hasn't had a sign yet. Yeah, and then someone pointed out Trump being President is the sign."

**Jordan Klepper:** "Wait, what? Trump take guns? But Obama take guns! So Obama build wall?"

**Jordan Klepper:** "Conservatives are not afraid of the NRA. That's ridiculous. I know that I'm not at all afraid of the NRA just because they're a multi-million-dollar lobbying machine with the ability to totally annihilate anyone who deviates from their message for even a second. No way."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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## DOI In The News

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### Panel To Recommend More Drilling, Lower Royalties.

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/27, King) reports, "The Interior Department's royalty advisers appear set to recommend lowering the rate the federal government charges operators to extract oil and gas offshore." The department's Royalty Policy Committee is slated to "hear suggestions from its three panels" on Wednesday and E&E reports the Planning, Analysis and Competitiveness Subcommittee "will recommend that royalty rates for lease sales in the outer continental shelf not exceed 12.5 percent" and "that Interior increase offshore acreage available for oil and gas leasing." According to E&E, Interior "appears poised to do so under its new five-year plan for energy development on the outer continental shelf," which "would open more than 90 percent of federal waters to exploration and production." E&E mentions that "Two of the trade groups – the Western Energy Alliance and American Petroleum Institute – that supported the CRA push on onshore orders 3, 4 and 5 attended the Feb. 2 subcommittee meeting."

***Democrats Warn Against Cut To Offshore Oil Royalties.*** [Reuters](#) (2/27, Volcovici) reports that "top Democrats on the Senate and House natural resources committees urged the Interior Department on Tuesday to drop a proposed cut to offshore oil and gas royalties, warning such a reduction would shortchange U.S. taxpayers." The Interior Department's Royalty Policy Committee is set "to evaluate a proposal to lower the royalty rate companies pay on petroleum produced in federal offshore waters to 12.5 percent from 18.75 percent – part of a plan by the Trump administration to encourage more U.S. energy production." In a letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Sen. Maria Cantwell and Rep. Raul Grijalva wrote, "This proposal would amount to a giveaway to some of the most profitable companies in the world and rob taxpayers of potentially billions of dollars of revenues over the life of the leases."

Additional coverage was provided by [Offshore Magazine](#) (2/27) and the [Texas Observer](#) (2/27, Schwellenbach).

### Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's NRA Visit Among Several Trips Being Questioned.

[CNN](#) (2/27, Alesci, Ganim, Marsh, Wallace) reports that several of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's travel decisions, including a September meeting with National Rifle Association members in Texas, "have some critics questioning his priorities, even if they don't necessarily violate agency rules." According to the article, "Zinke's travel habits have already spawned two investigations,

including one looking into whether his activities are in violation of the Hatch Act, which limits the political activity of federal employees." In response to questions from CNN about the Texas trip, Interior press secretary Heather Swift said, "the Scheduling Office meets regularly with the Departmental Ethics Office and the Division of General Law to ensure that all travel is thoroughly reviewed and approved in advance and that it is fully compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Consistent with this process, trips are reviewed and approved in advance by both the Departmental Ethics Office and the Division of General Law."

### **LISTEN: Secretary Of The Interior Ryan Zinke – What Does The New Plan For The Interior Look Like?**

[KXL-FM](#) Portland, OR (2/27, Sundberg) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke called in to the Lars Larson show to discuss his overhaul of the Interior Department. Zinke said that the reorganization plan seeks to reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies and bring decision-making power to the front lines.

### **Progressive Attorneys General Have Taken 80 Actions To Oppose Trump Environmental Actions: Study.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/27, Siegel) reports the State Energy & Environment Impact Center which "supports state attorneys general opposing the Trump administration's rollback of environmental regulations says the top lawyers in mostly progressive states have taken at least 80 actions in the past year to challenge those moves." The group "published a report Tuesday documenting the actions of state attorneys general who have used a variety of tactics to challenge the Trump administration as it seeks to delay or repeal a number of Obama-era environmental regulations." The center's executive director, David J. Hayes, said, "This report makes clear the outsized role state attorneys general are playing in advancing and defending progressive policies, regulations and values pertaining to environmental protection, the causes and impacts of a changing climate and the development of a clean energy economy."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/27, Siegel) reports a group "of liberal state attorneys general" yesterday "expressed confidence" that "they would emerge victorious in court." On Tuesday, they "participated in a briefing for reporters with colleagues on the sidelines of the National Association of Attorneys General 2018 Winter Meeting in Washington."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Supreme Court: Congress Properly Ended Michigan Casino Suit.**

The [AP](#) (2/27) reports that the Supreme Court ruled on Tuesday "that Congress acted within its authority when it ended a lawsuit that began over a Native American tribe's Michigan casino." The case "was making its second appearance before the justices." According to the AP, "Michigan resident David Patchak sued in 2008 after the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians, also known as the Gun Lake Tribe, got the go-ahead to build a casino on land near his property." The AP adds, "the first time the case was before the Supreme Court, Patchak was able to continue his lawsuit. But Congress soon passed a law that got the lawsuit dismissed." Patchak "argued that Congress had improperly determined the result in his case." Patchak's attorney "had argued that Congress went too far when it passed the law, violating the separation-of-powers principle in the Constitution," but "six justices disagreed with Gant and said Congress had acted properly."

[Roll Call \(DC\)](#) (2/27, Ruger) reports that "a divided Supreme Court on Tuesday backed the power of Congress to pass legislation that would affect ongoing litigation, ruling that a law about Michigan land and its use as a Native American casino did not violate the Constitution." In a 7-2 opinion, "the majority found that Congress did not overstep into the power of federal courts with a law to end a lengthy court battle over the Interior Department's decision to take that tract into trust for the Gun Lake Tribe of Pottawatomi Indians." The law "strips federal courts of jurisdiction over legal challenges to that property," and "it also reaffirmed the department's trust status and required the federal courts to dismiss lawsuits about what is called 'the Bradley property.'" Before the Gun Lake Act, federal courts had jurisdiction to hear these actions, Justice Clarence Thomas wrote for the majority. "Now they do not. This kind of legal change is well within Congress' authority and does not violate Article III."

Also reporting are [Courthouse News](#) (2/27, Leonard) and [Law360](#) (2/27, Westney).

## Bureau Of Land Management

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### BLM Speeds Ahead On Grand Staircase-Escalante Plans.

The [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (2/27, Wiles) reports that "federal authorities at Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument are moving forward to create new plans for managing the area, despite several legal challenges to the monument's boundaries." According to the article, three of the Bureau of Land Management's "new plans correspond" to President Trump's new units, "called Kaiparowits, Grand Staircase and Escalante Canyon." Additionally, "a fourth plan will cover BLM acreage that had been a part of the Clinton designation and was removed from the monument." The BLM "began accepting public comments in January related to the new plans; after public comment closes, the agency will produce draft plans."

### Energy Fuels Wins Approval To Expand Uranium, Vanadium Mines In Utah.

[Reuters](#) (2/27, Volcovici) reports that "uranium miner Energy Fuels said on Tuesday it has won federal approvals to expand operations at two mines in southeastern Utah, after years of challenges from conservation groups worried about radon gas emissions." The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service "last week approved the expansion of the company's La Sal complex near the Manti-La Sal National Forest, as well as the Daneros mine, located just outside the former boundaries of the Bears Ears National Monument, the company said." The approvals mean Energy Fuels can "expand the La Sal complex, which consists of four former uranium/vanadium mines, drill up to 400 exploration holes and build more ventilation shafts, while requiring the company to provide details of how it manages the facility during suspended operations."

### BLM Says American Magnesium Application For Deming Mine Is Incomplete.

The [Deming \(NM\) Headlight](#) (2/27, D'Amassa) reports that "after a full year and a revised proposal, a permit application for a proposed dolomite mine in Luna County remains incomplete, per the most recent response from the federal Bureau of Land Management." According to the article, "in a 5-page letter dated Dec. 8 and posted on the New Mexico Mineral and Mining Division's website last week, BLM District Manager Bill Childress hammered American Magnesium's revised Plan of Operations, submitted in July, for missing details, contradictory or implausible statements, and unintelligible maps."

### Converse County Oil And Gas Project Is An Opportunity Of Incredible Scope, With Challenges To Match.

The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (2/26, Richards) reports that in the coming decade, one of the "largest developments Wyoming has ever seen could be coming" to an empty stretch of prairie in Converse County. At its "peak, the proposed project would include 5,000 oil and gas wells on 1,500 pads." With that "staggering growth" will come a "number of concerns, from road wear to water use." Casper officials from the Bureau of Land Management said the project may generate an estimated 8,000 jobs "between \$18 and \$28 billion in revenue and economic activity." But with "big projects come big challenges," and for some in the environmental community, the "effects of the project could be as shocking as its industrial achievements." The Converse County "proposal spans 1.5 million acres" and was proposed to the BLM in 2014 by a consortium consisting of Chesapeake Energy, Anadarko Petroleum, Devon Energy, EOG Resources, and SM Energy.

## Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

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### Does The Northwest Have Offshore Oil To Drill For?

The [Clark County \(WA\) Columbian](#) (2/27, Hogan) reports the "administration's plan to open up Washington and Oregon's outer continental shelf to offshore oil exploration has angered many Northwest officials, Republicans included," but all the rhetoric has obscured the question of whether there's a meaningful supply of oil in the region to attract oil companies.

### Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan Panned At Hearing.

The [Salem \(MA\) News](#) (2/27, Wade) reports Bureau of Ocean Energy Management officials held a meeting Tuesday in Boston to provide information on President Trump's "proposal to open up the

New England coast to oil and gas exploration,” drawing protesters. The [Gloucester \(MA\) Times](#) (2/27, Wade) carries the same report.

### **Atlantic City, Cape May Officials Denounce Offshore Drilling Plan.**

The [Press of Atlantic City \(NJ\)](#) (2/26, Serpico) reports approximately 30 government officials and environmental activists held a rally on the boardwalk in Atlantic City Monday to denounce the Trump Administration’s proposed offshore drilling plan. US Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ), who is opposed to the plan, urged “state legislators, chambers of commerce, elected officials and residents to make sure Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke understand[s] how they feel about the plan.” Clean Ocean Action representative Cindy Zipf said, “We are not talking about if there would be an oil spill – we are talking about when. ... These shore towns are among the jewels of New Jersey, but they are the first to be impacted by an oil spill.”

### **Mayor, Other Foes Meet To Plan Opposition To Trump Drilling Plan.**

The [State House News Service \(MA\)](#) (2/26, Metzger) reports Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA) “convened groups with sometimes divergent interests to collectively oppose” the Trump Administration’s proposal to expand offshore drilling in the US on Monday. Representatives from environmental groups as well as the fishing industry spoke at the event, which was held at the New England Aquarium.

### **Support For Proposal Before CRC Could End Drilling In Florida Waters.**

The [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (2/26, Robinson) reports a proposal has been submitted to the Florida Constitution Revision Commission to “prohibit oil and gas drilling for exploration or extraction in and beneath Florida’s state and coastal waters.” Proposition 91 “would only effect Florida’s ‘territorial waters,’ which extend nine nautical miles on the state’s southern and western boundaries, and on the eastern coastal boundary, which extends to the edge of the Gulf Stream or three geographic miles, whichever is greater.” The CRC will “whittle down the proposals to a short list to appear on the ballot during the general election Nov. 6,” when propositions receiving “at least 60 percent of the vote will become law.”

### **Article On Area Warrants Aims To Gather Support For Studying Offshore Wind Development.**

The [Keene \(NH\) Sentinel](#) (2/26, Foley) reports on the efforts by Seacoast residents to “get New Hampshire officials to look at offshore wind as a possibility for powering the state” as petitions will greet residents of Alstead, Marlborough, Rindge, and Westmoreland at their March town meetings “asking voters to support New Hampshire joining Massachusetts and Maine to study the feasibility of developing offshore wind power in the Gulf of Maine.” Peterborough, which “has its town meeting in May, will also find the petition article on its warrant, said Patricia A. Martin, who was involved in getting signatures for the petition article in Rindge.”

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Virginia Tech To Collect Data On Nation’s Aging Water System.**

The [AP](#) (2/28) reports that Virginia Tech has “announced that it will lead a five-year effort to collect data on the reliability of the nation’s aging water pipelines.” The project – funded by the Bureau of Reclamation – will “establish an infrastructure database for resilient and sustainable water systems.” The study will “include analyses of the economics, cost-effectiveness and life-cycle costs of the various water pipe materials.”

### **Study Maps Future Of Deschutes River Basin; Open Houses Planned As Deschutes Basin Study.**

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (2/27, Hamway) reports that “after three years of planning, members of the public will have a chance to learn more about a \$1.5 million study that could shape management of the upper Deschutes River Basin for the next 50 years.” Starting March 5, the Bureau of Reclamation and “the basin study work group – a collection of 38 conservation groups, irrigation districts, Central Oregon city governments and other stakeholders – will be holding open houses in Sunriver, Bend and Madras.” Mike Relf, project manager for the Bureau of Reclamation, “said the two-hour open houses will provide an opportunity for residents to get an overview of the work that has gone into the Upper Deschutes Basin Study and ask questions.”



## **LYIP Hearing Set For March 5.**

The [Sidney \(MT\) Roundup](#) (2/28) reports that the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on March 5th will "hear oral arguments on the appeal by federal agencies and the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project against the injunction on the fish bypass and concrete weir imposed by Judge Brian Morris last summer."

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **BSEE Releases Marine Trash Training Video.**

[Maritime Executive](#) (2/27) reports that the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement has "developed a new marine training video focusing on the elimination of debris associated with oil and gas operations on the Outer Continental Shelf." The video is part of BSEE's Marine Trash and Debris Program.

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **FWS Turns To 'Duct Tape And Baling Wire'.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/27, Doyle) reports that the Fish and Wildlife Service "faces a \$1.3 billion deferred maintenance backlog that can sometimes get overlooked despite its ominous size." Officials are concerned that "the put-off problems will only get worse unless something changes." Reeg Sheehan, principal deputy director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, said in an interview, "Some of these areas get to a point where we just have to shut them off for public use, because of public safety. Some are closed for seismic standards. Many others [are closed] because restrooms, boardwalks, visitors centers just aren't usable or safe."

### **Endangered Death Valley Plants Are Recovering.**

[Courthouse News](#) (2/27, YOUNG-GRINDLE) reports that "an endangered plant in Death Valley has recovered and will be taken off the endangered species list, and a second plant there will be downlisted from endangered to threatened, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Monday." The Eureka Dunes evening primrose will be delisted and the Eureka dune grass downlisted to threatened, according to Fish and Wildlife's Southwest Region director Paul Souza. Souza "thanked Death Valley National Park for helping both species recover."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/26, Brean).

### **Latest Mexican Gray Wolf Count Shows Little Growth.**

[Cronkite News](#) (2/27, Miller) reports that 24 Mexican gray wolves were captured and collared this year "more than any previous year." However, the article notes, "after strong population growth of 16 wolves in 2016, the 2017 survey showed an increase of just one in the past year, bringing the number in Arizona and New Mexico to 114." Sherry Barrett, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mexican wolf recovery coordinator, said, "It was a disappointment that we didn't grow this year. It slows our time towards recovery."

### **Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge Opening Saturday March 3.**

[KTTN-FM](#) Trenton, MO (2/27) reports that Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge will reopen to the public on Saturday, March 3. The refuge is "closed annually from late October to the first Saturday of March to allow for undisturbed habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl."

### **Key Oregon Standoff Figure Sentenced To 3 Years In Prison.**

The [AP](#) (2/27, Dubois) reports that "a military veteran described as the architect of the armed takeover of a national wildlife refuge was sentenced Tuesday to three years and a month in prison, the longest sentence for anyone convicted in the case." Ryan Payne "helped seize the bird sanctuary in southeastern Oregon on Jan. 2, 2016, in a protest against federal control of Western lands and the imprisonment of two ranchers convicted of setting fires." He and Malheur refuge standoff leader Ammon Bundy "had come to Oregon two months earlier, warning Harney County Sheriff Dave Ward of civil unrest unless he told the federal government that ranchers Dwight and Steven Hammond would not report to prison."

## National Park Service

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### **Park Police Chief Offers Support For Body-Worn And In-Car Cameras After Bijan Ghaisar Shooting.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/27, Jackman) reports that on Tuesday, U.S. Park Police Chief Robert MacLean "met with two members of Congress...after canceling an earlier meeting, and told them he supported the use of body-worn and in-car cameras, which the Park Police do not currently have. In addition, acting National Park Service Director Dan Smith said that the park service has allocated \$5 million to purchase body cameras for park service officers." The Post notes that Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA) "are planning to introduce legislation requiring such cameras for all uniformed federal police in the wake of two Park Police officers fatally shooting Bijan Ghaisar in Fairfax County, Va., last November." The Post says the FBI "took over the investigation three days after the Nov. 17 shooting, and has released no further information about the case or given any indication when a ruling might be made on whether the officers will be charged."

### **Cherry Blossom Forecast: Peak Bloom Will Come About A Week Early This Year.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/27, Samenow) reports that "for the third year in a row, cherry blossoms are likely to reach peak bloom on the early side in Washington." The National Park Service "announced Monday the cherry trees reached green bud stage on Sunday, Feb. 25." The paper predicts "peak bloom during the window between March 23 and 27 this year, centered on the 25th."

### **Slimmed-Down, Sleek New Logo For Gateway Arch Makeover.**

The [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) (2/27, Sultan) reports that the Gateway Arch National Park on Tuesday unveiled a new logo. The logo is "an updated, contemporary interpretation of the Arch." The Arch will "be reopening its grounds, the museum and visitor center on July 3 after a \$380 million renovation."

Additional coverage was provided by the [St. Louis Patch](#) (2/27, Danielson).

### **Lake Mead Surges Into Sixth Among Nation's Busiest Parks.**

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/27, Brean) reports that Lake Mead National Recreation Area "rose to sixth among the nation's busiest parks in 2017 with almost 7.9 million visitors." The article notes that "it was Lake Mead's highest total since 2003, and it helped propel the National Park Service to its second busiest year on record, according to statistics just released by the agency." Park spokeswoman Christie Vanover said, "I think overall the National Park Service is starting to see its Find Your Park program work."

### **Popular Alaska Peak Weighs New Rules For Climbers' Poop.**

The [AP](#) (2/28, Joling) reports that the National Park Service is considering new rules for the disposal of human waste generated by Denali climbers. A researcher has "determined a glacier in which much of it has been dumped over the past decade probably is not decomposing the human waste." Michael Loso, a glacier geologist, "calculates that 36,000 climbers between 1951 and 2012 deposited 152,000 to 215,000 pounds (69 to 97 metric tons) of feces onto Kahiltna Glacier, part of the most popular route to Denali's summit." According to the article, "Loso's research indicates human waste never reaches the bottom of the glacier, will never be exposed to extreme temperatures and disintegrate, and likely will reappear downstream as stains on Kahiltna Glacier's surface where melting exceeds annual snowfall."

### **Wyoming State House Advances Yellowstone Fee Proposal.**

The [AP](#) (2/27) reports that "a proposal to collect a fee at Yellowstone National Park to fund wildlife conservation efforts in the states surrounding the park has passed the Wyoming House of Representatives." The resolution, "which also applies to neighboring Grand Teton National Park, was approved Tuesday and now heads to the state Senate for more debate." The measure "does not specify how the fee would be assessed or what the amount would be."

### **Zion's South Campground Switches To Reservation System.**

The [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/27) reports that the National Park Service has announced Zion National Park's South Campground will "open Thursday as a reservations-only campground."

## Insular And International Affairs

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### Calvo Orders Reduced Hours, Blames Senators.

The [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/27, Kerrigan) reports that Gov. Eddie Calvo on Tuesday "ordered his legal team and fiscal advisers to initiate a 32-hour workweek effective March 6 for all government of Guam workers." But "whether the rollback in work hours can be implemented" to avert "payless paydays" remains unknown. Also, "despite requests for clarification from the governor's office, it's not clear how many government employees would be affected, and how the order would affect public safety employees."

**Judiciary To Start Cost-Cutting Measures.** The [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/27) reports that "the chief justice of the Guam Supreme Court Tuesday ordered the implementation of the first cost-cutting moves in response to the governor's request for all agencies to reduce spending in light of the current fiscal crisis." The administrative order issued by Chief Justice Katherine Maraman takes effect on March 6.

**Calvo Prohibits Renewal Of Qualifying Certificates.** The [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (2/27, Limtiaco) reports that Gov. Eddie Calvo on Tuesday "ordered the government to stop renewing qualifying certificates, which are an economic development incentive that allows some businesses to pay little or no taxes for at least 20 years." According to the article, "the government of Guam faces a revenue shortfall of about \$67.9 million this fiscal year because of federal tax cuts, and Calvo has asked lawmakers to increase the local business privilege tax by 50 percent for two years to make up for that shortfall."

## Office Of Surface Mining

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### Feds Provide \$7.5 Million To Montana Through Coal Program.

The [AP](#) (2/27) reports that "the federal government is providing up to \$7.5 million to help reclaim abandoned coal mines in Montana." [KTVQ-TV](#) Billings, MT (2/27, Fuhrer) reports that the funds will "help stabilize collapsed coal mines and clean up acid drainage."

## US Geological Survey

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### USGS Study Finds River Sediment Can Be Used In Place Of Frac Sand.

[Reuters](#) (2/27) reports the US Geological Survey said yesterday that Missouri River Basin sediment "can be as used a fracking proppant, or frac sand." Using "reservoir sediment for fracking could help defray costs associated with mitigating sediment buildup in waterways, the USGS found in the study."

### In Other Action: Lafourche Parish Council, Feb. 27, 2018.

The [Houma \(LA\) Courier](#) (2/27) reports that the Lafourche Parish Council during its regular meeting Tuesday night "approved a joint funding agreement between the parish and the U.S. Department of the Interior Geological Survey for the operation and maintenance of three real-time water-quality monitoring stations." According to the article, "the total cost for the stream gauging program will be \$27,330 with the U.S. Geological Survey contributing \$6,720 and Lafourche Parish contributing \$20,610."

### Additional Reading.

- *Spring Has Arrived Early For Much Of The US. It's Gorgeous.* [Vox](#) (2/27, Resnick).

## Opinion Pieces

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### Offshore Energy Exploration Good For SC.

In an op-ed for the [Columbia \(SC\) State](#) (2/26), South Carolina Petroleum Council Executive Director Mark Harmon argues that "[a] decision about offshore exploration deserves thoughtful consideration," pointing out that more than 30 years have passed "since seismic surveys were conducted off the Atlantic coast." Harmon believes it is "time we learn what resources lie off our coast and make decisions about our energy future...with the most accurate data possible." South

Carolina would benefit from “[r]evenue generated from offshore development,” which “has the potential to revolutionize our schools and infrastructure.” Ultimately, Harmon says South Carolina “shouldn’t suffer due to rash and unfounded decisions to block offshore exploration,” and instead would be better served to “explore the possibilities.”

### **NC Would Benefit From Offshore Drilling.**

North Carolina Petroleum Institute Executive Director David McGowan argues in a [Raleigh \(NC\) News & Observer](#) (2/27, McGowan) op-ed that the state would benefit from offshore drilling because it “sorely” needs the “economic development prospects and the benefits that come along with them...to ensure that our young people are able to find good quality jobs and profit from a strong economic future.” He argues that “offshore energy exploration and production could bring lots of crucial economic and energy benefits to our state,” urging readers to “remember that there is value in viewing the full picture.” McGowan concludes, “The working families of North Carolina can and will benefit from the additional U.S. energy resources that might be discovered in the Atlantic OCS. Revenue generated directly and indirectly through offshore exploration could help fund our public schools and infrastructure in our rural communities that are in dire need.”

### **Our View: Energy Plans Need Common Sense, Not Politics.**

The [Fayetteville \(NC\) Observer](#) (2/27) editorializes that the “plan to expand offshore oil and gas drilling to just about everywhere off the American coast” provoked “lively clashes” in Raleigh on Monday. According to the Observer, drilling advocates – including Former state Sen. Thom Goolsby, a Wilmington Republican, who hosted “a private reception for the American Petroleum Institute” – were present “and making sure their message got out.” The Observer argues against expanding offshore drilling, concluding “If we could get the politics and the money out of the picture, we might be able to have a sensible national conversation about our energy future. We don’t expect that to happen anytime soon, but we’d love to be surprised.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *64% Of Trump’s Agenda Already Done, Faster Than Reagan.* [Washington Examiner](#) (2/27, Bedard).
- *Is There Any Good Reason To Drill For Oil Off N.C.’s Coasts?* [Raleigh \(NC\) Independent Weekly](#) (2/27, Billman).
- *Where Have The True Champions Of Public Lands Gone?* [Crosscut \(WA\)](#) (2/26, Danner).
- *Lawsuit Threatening LYIP Ramps Up.* [Sidney \(MT\) Roundup](#) (2/28, Swanson).

## **Top National News**

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### **As Gun Debate Appears To Stall In Congress, Trump To Unveil Proposals This Week.**

Media coverage of the aftermath of the deadly school shooting in Parkland, Florida casts Republicans as unwilling to move forward with gun control legislation despite strong pressure from student activists and public opinion in general. With legislative avenues seemingly stalled on Capitol Hill, [Politico](#) (2/27, Lima) reports White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said Tuesday that the Administration “will reveal which policy proposals it supports on school safety by the end of the week,” but already “mentioned two measures the White House supports, including the ‘Fix NICS’ bill spearheaded by” Senate Majority Whip Cornyn. [The Hill](#) (2/27, Fabian) reports Sanders also “sought to push back on speculation that [President] Trump is backing away” from proposals to “to raise the age limit to buy the type of high-powered rifle used in the Parkland...shooting,” telling reporters, “The President still supports raising the age limit to 21 for the purchase of certain firearms.” Under the headline “Congress Looks For More Clarity From Trump As It Weighs Response To Florida School Shootings,” however, the [Washington Post](#) (2/27, Kim, DeBonis) illustrates lawmakers’ confusion about Trump’s stances by reporting that Sen. Pat Roberts “believes” the President “has backed off his call on raising the minimum age for rifle purchases.”

At any rate, [Reuters](#) (2/27, Cornwell, Cowan) points out, House GOP leaders “said on Tuesday that they would not raise the minimum age for gun buyers, in a sign that one of...Trump’s proposals likely will not get far on Capitol Hill.” Kellyanne Conway reiterated on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/27) that Trump “supports increasing the age perhaps for possession of some firearms. He certainly supports fixing NICS, the background checks. He has also talked about mental health. He’s talked about how he wants to make it more difficult for people who

shouldn't have firearms to have them, but easier for those who should and should be allowed to carry them under the Second Amendment to do so. ... It's a complex issue. ... But this is a president, like he did on immigration, on energy policy, on taxes, he is bringing both parties and both chambers into the White House or he is going to them and he is working the phones and he is talking to them about what's possible. In the end, Congress will need to act and the President will sign into law something that is reasonable, common sense that gets us closer to keeping school children safe."

Another [Politico](#) (2/27, Schor, Woellert) story indicates "lawmakers from both parties, including some of the Democrats' strongest gun-control advocates, are planning to meet with...Trump Wednesday." Politico adds that Cornyn and his "Fix NICS" co-sponsor Sen. Chris Murphy "are both expected to attend," as are Sen. Dianne Feinstein, "chief author of legislation banning assault weapons and other control bills," and Sen. Joe Manchin, "who crafted a background-check expansion plan with Sen. Pat Toomey." The [Washington Post](#) (2/27, Kim, DeBonis) reports that "in advance of the bipartisan gun summit at the White House on Wednesday, lawmakers are searching for signals from the administration," though "there is also an open question in Congress over how much Trump will actually affect the debate, with some Senate leaders pushing for more guidance from the president given his continuing focus on the shootings, while other top senators are skeptical that any guidance from the mercurial president – such as during the stalemate on immigration – will ultimately matter much."

For now, the [AP](#) (2/27, Mascaro, Daly) reports, House Speaker Ryan "showed little interest Tuesday in some of the stricter gun proposals being floated by...Trump or bipartisan coalitions in Congress," and "Senate Republicans pushed" the Fix NICS bill, "a more modest measure to boost the existing background check system with new penalties and incentives." Mary Bruce of [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/27, story 6, 1:50, Muir) reported, "Florida students on Capitol Hill are pressing lawmakers to act on guns, but...their calls are falling flat." Ryan was shown saying, "We shouldn't be banning guns for law-abiding citizens. We should be focusing on making sure that citizens who should not get guns in the first place don't get those guns." ABC added that Fix NICS is "stalled in the Senate and likely would not have stopped the Florida shooter." ABC added that "as recently as Saturday, the President has called to raise the minimum age to purchase rifles," but "there is no legislation in the works."

[Roll Call](#) (2/27, Connolly) reported "the Republican-controlled House passed" the Fix NICS "bill in December mostly on party lines," and attached a "so-called concealed-carry reciprocity measure." After the Florida shooting, the Cornyn-Murphy bill "has bipartisan support," but concealed-carry reciprocity does not. House GOP leaders "indicated Tuesday morning at their weekly press conference that they were not ready to let the Senate's background check bill stand alone from the House's concealed-carry addendum." Said Ryan, "We think the Senate should accept our bill." [Politico](#) (2/27, Bade), under the headline "Ryan Throws Cold Water On Gun Control Push," notes Ryan also "said arming teachers was a 'good idea' but a local issue that Congress should not infringe upon."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/27, Dinan) reports "Senate Republicans in charge of the next steps on gun control said Tuesday they want to focus on bills where there's broad agreement, such as expanding the number of records available in the background check system, while putting off thorny fights over weapons bans." Said Senate Majority Leader McConnell, "We've been down this path before. There are bipartisan differences about how to address this issue that have continually snagged every effort." [The Hill](#) (2/27, Bolton) notes McConnell "signaled his support for" the Cornyn-Murphy bill.

House Majority Whip Scalise, asked on [CBS This Morning](#) (2/27) if he would support a proposal to raise the age to buy an assault rifle to 21, said, "Right now I think if you look, the laws are varied and every state also has the ability to change their law. There are a number of things being looked at now. That's not one of the things being talked about as much as basically as closing loopholes. We have a lot of mental health issues. We have some breakdowns at the federal and local level in law enforcement. Clearly a lot of us have serious questions about the FBI and why this wasn't stopped in the first place when they had this kid handed to him on a silver platter months ago."

Asked on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/27) if he is concerned about the President changing his mind about the policy proposals he will support, Sen. Jeff Flake said, "It has been an issue. ... He seems to have changed on a few of those items. It is difficult to negotiate. But I hope that he sticks with this. He said it a number of times just after the tragedy and I know that is where the kids are. That's what they want. A lot of parents across the country and others too. There's just simply no justification for having the minimum age be 21 for a handgun but only 18 for an



assault weapon. That makes no sense at all."

Sen. Chris Coons said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/27), "Yesterday I had a chance to visit one of Delaware's high schools and to hear from 500 high school students. The number one issue they wanted to talk about was gun safety, gun violence, what it's meant to them to have grown up in an environment where they go through school lockdown drills, active shooter drills and their angry insistence that we in Washington listen to them and take action. I've been talking to Republican colleagues...about what bills we can introduce that have a chance of moving forward. I remain hopeful that we will take up and vote on commonsense bills that will strengthen the enforcement of existing laws and put in place new laws but the political reality is harsh and when the kids at the high school in Delaware asked me yesterday what can we do to be more effective in lobbying congress for action I said don't change the subject, don't go away, stay at it."

[USA Today](#) (2/27, Shesgreen), meanwhile, quotes House Democratic Caucus Chairman Joe Crowley as saying, "There's no daylight between the Parkland students and really the overwhelming majority of the Democratic caucus. ... It was inspiring to have them here today. ... We took energy from each other. I think that was important."

***Senate Democrats May Block "Fix NICS" Bill Unless It's Expanded.*** The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/27, Ferrechio) reports "Senate Democrats on Tuesday were preventing movement on a bill to boost the criminal background check system for gun purchases, even as Republicans kept up the pressure for a quick vote in the wake of this month's school shooting in Florida." Democrats "made it clear they want more than the Fix NICS bill." Senate Minority Leader Schumer "is demanding the addition, at the very least, of universal background checks, which would expand screening requirements for firearms transactions to gun shows and Internet sales." Said Schumer, "We want a debate, but we want a debate on more than Fix NICS. ... We Democrats have a list of things we think need to be done." [Politico](#) (2/27, Schor) also reports Schumer "signaled...that his caucus may block" the "narrow bipartisan proposal to improve – but not expand – background checks for gun purchases unless Republican leaders commit to voting on broader gun control measures."

***With Eye On November Contests, Democrats Meet With Gun-Control Groups At DSCC Headquarters.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/27, O'Keefe) reports "a group of Democratic lawmakers huddled Tuesday with representatives from several national gun-control organizations – a first-of-its-kind meeting aimed at finding ways to politicize the issue of gun-related violence ahead of congressional elections this fall." The Post adds that "for years, Democrats have struggled to balance calls from the party's base to push for stricter gun-control laws with electoral realities that see the party struggling to maintain support in rural areas of the country," but "the recent shooting...has exposed fissures in the GOP ranks." Yesterday's "meeting was held in a conference room at the headquarters of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, but the location doesn't signal that the campaign arm for Senate Democrats is organizing with the gun-control groups or endorsing whatever they might decide to do," said Murphy.

[The Hill](#) (2/27, Lillis) reported that "other Democrats," however, "warn that embracing aggressive new gun restrictions carries risks, particularly in conservative-leaning districts where gun rights are sacrosanct." A "former Democratic leadership aide" said, "It's one of those fundamental issues that riles up American politics – it's up there with abortion and immigration – and they need to be very careful. ... It's easier to demagogue on this than to do something about it...and you risk overreaching as a party if you try to make it a one-size-fits-all [issue]."

To the [New York Times](#) (2/27, Martin, Burns), meanwhile, the Florida shooting "has thrust gun rights into the midterm campaign, scrambling traditional game plans in both parties as the debate shifts toward action on firearms restrictions." While "a host of House Republicans and a handful of the party's governors are beginning to distance themselves from their party's gun-rights orthodoxy...moderates recognize that bearing the mark of the NRA could be fatal in their primaries." To bolster this point, the story quotes "Richard Cordray, the leading Democratic candidate for governor in Ohio," and "Gov. Jay Inslee of Washington State," the head of the Democratic Governors Association who "lost his House seat after voting for" a 1994 assault-weapons ban. The Times adds that "on the Republican side, Gov. Bill Haslam of Tennessee, who runs the Republican Governors Association but does not have to run again, gave his party a blunt warning about the political challenge staring it in the face: voters 'particularly among suburban women,' are mobilizing for gun control."

***Florida House, Senate Committees Approve Bills To Arm Teachers.*** The [AP](#) (2/27, Kennedy, Farrington, Anderson) reports "family members of people killed in a South Florida school shooting gave emotional testimony Tuesday during a legislative hearing to discuss passing a bill that would allow for armed teachers and raise the age limit to buy rifles." A House committee "approved the

bill that would raise the minimum age to buy rifles from 18 to 21 and creates a three-day waiting period for all gun purchase." The measure "would also create a program that allows teachers who receive law enforcement training and are deputized by the local sheriff's office to carry concealed weapons in the classroom if also approved by the school district." [Breitbart](#) (2/27, Hawkins) notes Florida's House Appropriations Committee also "voted Tuesday against adding an 'assault weapons' ban" to the legislation.

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/27, Bousquet) reports a Florida Senate approved a similar – but not identical – measure. Whereas the House bill would "train teachers to carry guns in class under the direction of local law enforcement – if superintendents or the school board approve," the Senate Appropriations Committee would require "that both the sheriff and school district officials in a county agree to the program before it can be adopted." The [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (2/27, Sweeney, Fleshler) notes "Gov. Rick Scott doesn't support the part of the plan that would allow teachers to carry firearms, though he has not said whether its inclusion would mean a veto." The [New York Times](#) (2/27, Mazzei) points out that "it was unclear" whether Scott "would accept a proposal from lawmakers to arm school personnel other than teachers, such as athletic coaches who sometimes double as security monitors. He declined to clarify his position in a news conference in the Miami suburb of Doral on Tuesday."

**Michigan House Bill To Allow Gun Training For Teachers Who Volunteer For It.** The [Detroit Free Press](#) (2/27, Gray) reports that a bill "being developed" by two Republicans in the Michigan House would allow teachers to be armed. State Rep. Jim Runestad "will schedule hearings this spring on a bill that he's drafting that will allow school districts to provide access to guns in locked, undisclosed locations in school buildings to teachers who volunteer and who are trained in firearm use." The teachers "would have to go through 80 hours of training on how to shoot a gun, gun safety, how to engage with an active shooter and tactics to de-escalate a dangerous situation." The guns "would be hidden in locked compartments that would only be accessible through the thumbprint of approved school employees."

**Bevin, Abbott Weigh In On Trump Proposal To Arm Certain Teachers.** Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin, asked on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/27) about the President's suggestion that some teachers be armed in the schools, said, "I think on a voluntary basis, purely volitional, I think it's a very good idea and worthy of being considered. I think teachers who are willing should go through an extensive training far above and beyond what it takes to be a conceal carry gun owner. Should go through a battery of psychiatric tests to ensure they are mentally able. ... But it shouldn't just be teachers, it should be available to administrators. Custodians, coaches, anyone inside that school on a voluntary basis, I think we would be foolish not to consider that as a possibility."

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/27), "It is important to understand that not one size fits all when it comes to the approach to address this issue. Texas is maybe different than Washington State. Even parts of Texas are different than other parts of Texas but in Texas we do have a robust program of allowing but not requiring teachers to be authorized to carry guns in schools. Not just teachers, it could be coaches or administrators or others. That is called our School Marshall program. Where people, persons who work in schools, will be authorized to carry. Sometimes it will be notified in front of a school, when a school puts up a billboard saying that teachers are armed. Don't harm any kid on this campus. Other times it is more concealed."

[USA Today](#) (2/27) editorializes that "few educators have any desire to wield firearms or be responsible for going into combat with heavily armed intruders. Even police officers with years of training still have doubts – and make mistakes – during critical moments at crime scenes." Jerome R. Corsi, author of "Killing the Deep State: The Fight to Save President Trump," writes in [USA Today](#) (2/27) that "arming all teachers and school staff is no solution in situations where teachers and staff feel fully committed to dealing with educational issues," but "in cases where teachers and school staff are predisposed to be comfortable with concealed carry, as could well be the case with military veterans or retired law enforcement who make education their second career, allowing them the right to carry weapons provides the possibility of a near instant response. A would-be school shooter can be neutralized before schoolchildren are senselessly murdered."

**Romney: Decision On Whether To Arm Teachers Should Be Left Up To States.** The [AP](#) (2/27, Price) reports that Mitt Romney, the heavy favorite in the 2018 race to succeed retiring Sen. Orrin Hatch, on Tuesday "said there are a number of things officials should look at to prevent school shootings," though he declined to reveal "if he thinks more states should let teachers carry guns, as Utah does." Speaking with reporters, Romney said "that he knows some Utah teachers



with concealed carry permits are able to provide security in their classrooms but it should be up to individual states to decide whether they'll permit that."

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/27, Anderson) reports that Romney "continued his call for states – rather than Congress – to address gun control in the wake of another mass shooting," but "said he supports work being done to increase the amount of information that's shared with a federal background check database." Said Romney, "I do believe that we have to substantially enhance our background check capacity and accuracy. I think you'll see a coalescing of viewpoints in doing a much better job on background checks."

***Cruz Neighbor Says She "Begged" Police To Take Action, Was Told Cruz Was No "Immediate Threat."*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/27, Persons) reports "a former neighbor of Nikolas Cruz...said she 'begged' police to act regarding his disturbing behavior and threatening social media posts, CNN reported Tuesday." Joelle Guarino told CNN her son "showed her multiple posts on social media from Mr. Cruz, including one of an AR-15 and another about shooting up a school." Guarino said that at her request, "a police officer came to her home" and told her "there was nothing he could do." Said Guarino, "I begged him, and he basically told me that it was not an immediate threat. He couldn't do anything, is what he told me."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/27) editorializes that "it is not quite right to say that...Cruz...fell through the cracks. The truth is even more unsettling," as "many people" had been "alerted to Mr. Cruz's troubling behavior," including "school officials, police, state social services workers and friends" who "sought to intervene and help." To the Post, "their failure underscores just how difficult it is to deal with mental illness." At any rate, "the law enforcement agencies that interacted with this suspect – or should have, as was the case with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which completely botched a detailed tip – must...face a reckoning," but "when all those reviews are completed, this much will remain true: There will always be an element of human error and unpredictability in these difficult cases." The Post concludes that "that is why an additional reform is so logical: banning weapons of war."

***Teachers, Counselors Hoped Alternative School Would Address Cruz's Mental Health Issues.*** [USA Today](#) (2/27, Murphy, Perez) reports "teachers and counselors at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School hoped a transfer to an alternative school would provide mental health services for...Cruz after his behavior and discipline problems increased in 2016." Broward County Superintendent Robert Runcie "said Cruz's situation at Douglas had deteriorated so much so that his counselors and teachers decided to refer him out of the school in early 2017," hoping "he would return to Cross Creek School, an alternative program with smaller classes and a more comprehensive offering of mental health services." Said Runcie, "He declined. ... When a kid turns 18, we can't force an adult to receive those services."

***Hurricane-Proof Glass Windows May Have Avoided Additional Carnage.*** On [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/27, story 3, 1:50, Holt), Kerry Sanders reported that it "has learned shooting suspect Nicolas Cruz may have had more plans to unleash more carnage inside his former high school. At the time he dropped his AR-15, he still had five fully loaded magazines, one marked with a swastika." Manuel Bojorquez of the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/27, story 3, 1:20, Glor) also reported "more people could have been injured or killed." Cruz "began firing in the first and second floors of the freshman building, he continued to make his way up. And that is where investigators believe he planned on using a third-floor stairwell as a vantage point to shoot at students. Sources say Cruz attempted to create a sniper's nest by shooting out a glass window, firing 16 rounds into the glass," but "the hurricane-proof glass appeared to have stopped it from shattering."

***Marjory Stoneman Douglas Students Return To School Today.*** The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/27, story 4, 2:25, Glor) reported students were to "return to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School" this morning "for the first time since the shooting. They will have a half day of classes tomorrow." CBS (Diaz) added "grief counselors will be in every classroom that's missing a student who passed away." The [Miami Herald](#) (2/27, Herrera) and [Washington Post](#) (2/27, Balingit), among other news outlets, also report on the students' return to school.

***Researchers: School Shootings Have Been Declining Since Early 1990s.*** The [Washington Times](#) (2/27, Boyer) reports that "despite the horror of the high school massacre in Florida, US schools overall are safer today than they were in the early 1990s, and there is not an epidemic of such shootings, a new academic study is reporting." According to "researchers at Northeastern University...mass school shootings are extremely rare," and "shootings involving students have been declining since the 1990s." Back then, say the researchers, "four times as many children were killed in schools." The Times adds "the researchers used data collected by USA Today, the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Report, Congressional Research Service, Gun Violence Archive,

Stanford Geospatial Center and Stanford Libraries, Mother Jones, Everytown for Gun Safety, and a New York City Police Department report on active shooters."

**Law Banning CDC Research On Mental Health, Shootings Complicates Gun Debate.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/27, Sherfinski) reports, "One of the big unknowns in the gun debate is the actual role mental health plays in fueling mass shootings. And analysts say the reason it's still unknown is because a provision of federal law has prevented the federal government from funding that research for more than two decades. The Trump administration this month suggested some cracks in the ban," with HHS Secretary Azar saying "he sees room for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to fund some research – but not actual lobbying efforts."

**Rubio Gun Bill Would Allow Young Adults In District Of Columbia To Buy An AR-15.** [McClatchy](#) (2/27, Daugherty) reports that "during an intense town hall event with Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School students, parents and alumni," Sen. Marco Rubio said last week, "I absolutely believe that in this country, if you are 18 years of age you should not be able to buy a rifle. I will support a law that takes that right away." However, "one of Rubio's own bills, which he has introduced twice, would overturn an assault weapons ban and legalize gun sales for young adults in the nation's capital, allowing 18- to 21-year-olds in Washington, D.C. to purchase weapons like the AR-15 used in the Parkland shooting if federal law doesn't change." Rubio "introduced the Second Amendment Enforcement Act in 2015 and again in 2017 that would drastically change the District of Columbia's gun laws."

**Media Analyses: Companies Under Increasing Pressure To Cut Ties With NRA.** The [New York Times](#) (2/27, Hsu) reports that in the wake of the deadly school shooting in Florida, "a range of people and coalitions have converged on the nationwide battleground over gun control." Via "an uncoordinated but simpatico collection of Twitter hashtags, retweeted lists, Facebook groups, online petitions and carefully orchestrated campaigns, the protest has pushed a major bank, several car rental companies, two airlines and other businesses to publicly cut ties with the NRA. On Monday night, the insurance broker Lockton Affinity was the latest to join a list of more than a dozen companies that includes the insurance provider MetLife, the cybersecurity firm Symantec and the automobile pricing and information website TrueCar."

The [AP](#) (2/27, Troise) reports that "companies are under growing pressure to pick a side: whether to stand by the" NRA "or walk away. Metlife, Delta and more than a dozen others have decided to end benefits deals offered to the organization's members. Others, including FedEx, are staying put." The AP adds, "The calls for boycotts have been cutting both ways, with gun rights and gun-control supporters threatening to take their dollars elsewhere, depending on a company's decision."

Under the headline "In NRA. Fight, Delta Finds There Is No Neutral Ground," the [New York Times](#) (2/27, Fausset) reports that after Delta Air Lines "announced it was ending a promotional discount with the" NRA, it "suddenly found itself in the rare position of being openly dressed down – and potentially punished – by" GOP lawmakers in Georgia. Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, "who presides over the State Senate and has received an A-plus grade from the NRA., joined other conservative lawmakers this week in threatening to remove a \$50 million sales tax exemption" benefiting Delta. The Times adds, "The conservative backlash highlighted the challenge confronting corporations around the country that are struggling to cater to both ends of America's increasingly distant political and cultural poles."

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/27, Sasso, Schlangenhein) reports, "FedEx Corp. on Tuesday trumpeted that the gun-rights group uses United Parcel Service Inc. for shipments from the online NRA store. 'And not FedEx,' the company said by email, underlining the last two words of the sentence. UPS responded quickly. Yes, it has a shipping deal with the NRA, it said. But it doesn't offer special services for the group's members. FedEx does, and that company said Monday that it would maintain its discounts for businesses and consumers who belong to the NRA. The package-delivery giants issued the dueling statements amid rising public pressure on companies with business ties to the NRA."

In a [USA Today](#) (2/27) op-ed, Jon Gabriel, editor in chief of Ricochet.com, decries the campaign to force companies to cut ties with the NRA, writing, "Before this witch hunt ends, perhaps there can be two separate financial systems – one for Republicans and one for Democrats." Gabriel adds, "All of these pressure campaigns accomplish nothing but alienate people based on their politics. The result is to divide Americans into ever smaller subgroups in which we can't sit in the same town hall or, apparently, shop in the same stores."

**Chris Matthews: NRA's "Real Targets" Are "Eyewitnesses" To School Shooting.** Chris Matthews writes in the [Washington Post](#) (2/27) that "fifty years ago, CBS's Walter Cronkite stepped from his role as objective TV anchor to call for a negotiated settlement of America's war

in Southeast Asia. ... Who, on this half-century anniversary of Cronkite's commentary, can match his credibility and authenticity?" Matthews nominates "the students and teachers of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School," and charges that "Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association has attacked the 'media,'" but "his real targets are the eyewitnesses to the horror at that school," who "have brought a new credibility in the national discussion."

***Shooting Survivor's Father Says He Accidentally Omitted Some Words From Email In CNN Spat.***

The [AP](#) (2/27) reports, "The father of a Florida shooting survivor acknowledged Tuesday he omitted words in an email he sent media outlets accusing CNN of using scripted remarks at a town hall on guns and school safety. Dozens of conservative websites called" CNN's "Feb. 21 town hall forum scripted after Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School junior Colton Haab skipped the event and said the network had told him what question to ask." Speaking with the AP, Glenn Haab said "he omitted some words from the email but said he didn't do it on purpose. 'There was nothing malicious behind it,' he said."

***WPost Examines Effort "To Push False Information" About Florida Shooting.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/27, Timberg, Harwell) reports, "Forty-seven minutes after news broke of a high school shooting in Parkland, Fla., the posters on the anonymous chat board 8chan had devised a plan to bend the public narrative to their own designs: 'Start looking for [Jewish] numerology and crisis actors.' The voices from this dark corner of the Internet quickly coalesced around a plan of attack: Use details gleaned from news reports and other sources to push false information about one of America's deadliest school shootings." The Post says, "The success of this effort would soon illustrate how lies that thrive on raucous online platforms increasingly shape public understanding of major events." The Post adds that "the episode became the latest cautionary tale about how the Internet itself had become a potent tool of deception wielded by political extremists, disinformation warriors and conspiracy theorists."

***Bruenig: Some On The Right Use Mass Shootings To Advance Their Agenda.*** In her [Washington Post](#) (2/27) column, Elizabeth Bruenig argues that some on the right seize use mass shootings, such as the one in Parkland, Florida, in an effort to push their agenda. Bruenig says, "Mass murders, especially those that take place in US schoolhouses, appear to advance the much-beloved conservative claim that the state cannot or will not help you; that our government is disorderly, shambolic and derelict by its very nature; that you are in danger, very grave danger, and the only person you can really trust to protect you is yourself. ... A certain breed of far-right American conservatism thrives on the kind of nightmarish mistrust that makes social cohesion impossible – the same breed that demonizes immigrants, welfare recipients, people of color, and so on."

***Israelis Discuss School Safety, Gun Control.*** The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/27, story 8, 2:15, Glor) reported that in Israel, armed guards stand outside the main entrances of schools "not by choice, but by law. Since 1974, there have been a half dozen terror attacks on Israeli schools." However, Matty Stern, an Israeli High School Principal, said "none" of his teachers are armed, adding, "This is the job of the police. This is the job of the state." Sharon Gat, the CEO of the Israeli company Caliber 3 Academy says that "gun laws in America are much more loose than gun laws in Israel." CBS (Vigliotti) added, "Every gun owner in Israel has to go through training." In addition, "it can take up to three months to get a gun. For starters, you have to be over 27, unless you've served in the military. Then, you must prove that your job requires a gun, and get a doctor to sign off."

**Cornyn Doubts Infrastructure Legislation Will Pass This Year.**

[Reuters](#) (2/27, Shepardson) reports that Senate Majority Whip Cornyn on Tuesday "expressed doubt that Congress will pass legislation to increase infrastructure spending this year, citing time constraints." Cornyn told reporters, "I think it will (be) challenging. I certainly would be happy if we could, but we've got a lot of things to do, that being one of them, and I don't know if we will have time to get to that." While the President "wants Congress to approve \$200 billion in federal spending over 10 years designed to spur \$1.5 trillion in infrastructure spending." White House spokeswoman Lindsay Walters said of Cornyn's comments that officials are "encouraged to see Congress acting on the President's call, with hearings starting in earnest."

[Politico](#) (2/27, Gurciullo) reports that Sen. Tom Carper, ranking member on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "I hope he's wrong. ... John's a smart guy, but I think he's wrong in this case and I hope he's wrong. ... This Administration, the President has talked so much about infrastructure, transportation, broadband deployment, water, sewer. If we can't figure out a path forward on this, shame on the President, shame on the Administration, shame on the Congress."

## **Trump Calls For More Talks On Biofuels After Meeting Yields No Deal.**

[Reuters](#) (2/27, Renshaw) reports that after a meeting Tuesday “failed to yield an agreement on how to help refiners cope with the country’s biofuels policy,” President Trump has called for additional talks between representatives of the oil and corn industries. Trump has sought “the talks between Big Corn and Big Oil amid rising concern in the White House over the US Renewable Fuel Standard,” which was “intended to help farmers and reduce US petroleum imports but has increasingly divided farmers and energy companies.” Tuesday’s meeting “included Republican Senators Ted Cruz of Texas and Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania – both from major oil refining states – along with Charles Grassley and Joni Ernst of major corn grower state Iowa.” White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders confirmed the meeting and said, “We’re going to continue having conversations.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/27, Wolfgang) says that in the wake of Tuesday’s meeting, “critics of the Renewable Fuel Standard suggested they’re slowly pulling President Trump to their side and expect to reach a deal that benefits their allies in the oil industry in the coming weeks.” Cruz, who “has been leading the charge to weaken the law, claiming it is financially crushing some oil refiners,” said Tuesday, “This morning, we had a very positive and productive meeting on fixing the broken [ethanol] system. I commend President Trump for bringing the two sides together and for leaning in hard to find a win-win solution that benefits both Iowa farmers and blue-collar refinery workers. ... We made real progress, and, with the President’s leadership, I believe we are close to solving the problem.”

## **Powell: Economic Outlook Remains Strong.**

[USA Today](#) (2/27, Davidson) reports that in his first Capitol Hill appearance as Fed chair, Jerome Powell told the House Financial Services Committee Tuesday that government tax and spending plans that are likely to boost the economy and increase inflation could cause the Fed to increase interest rates more quickly. However, Powell said he still anticipates “gradual” increases and said he would not “prejudge” whether other Fed policymakers “would increase their median forecast of three rate increases this year at a March 20-21 meeting.” Powell added that “he’s not worried that recent volatility in financial markets and higher long-term interest rates will dampen the economy,” telling the panel, “Indeed, the economic outlook remains strong.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/27, Swanson, Appelbaum) says Powell “painted an optimistic picture of the United States economy,” and “emphasized that he planned to continue the policies of his predecessor, Janet L. Yellen, who managed to gradually raise interest rates during her four-year term while still encouraging broad economic growth.” Similarly, [Reuters](#) (2/27, Schneider, Lange) says Powell’s tone “as one of continuity, as he told lawmakers the Fed would balance the need to guard against excessive inflation with the benefits of allowing the economy to enjoy the ‘tailwinds’ of tax cuts and strong global growth.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/27, Harrison) reports that Powell told the committee, “My personal outlook for the economy has strengthened since December. ... We’ve seen continuing strength in the labor market. We’ve seen some data that will, in my case, add some confidence to my view that inflation is moving up to target. We’ve also seen continued strength around the globe, and we’ve seen fiscal policy become more stimulative.”

**Stocks End Lower On Fear Of Interest Rate Hikes.** [Reuters](#) (2/27, Valetkevitch) reports that Powell’s comments “revived fears about more interest-rate increases than expected this year,” sending stocks into “their biggest daily drops since the selloff three weeks ago.” The Dow fell 299.24 points to 25,410.03, while the S&P 500 gave up 35.32 points to close at 2,744.28, and the Nasdaq ended the day 91.11 points lower at 7,330.35.

**Consumer Confidence At Highest Point Since November 2000.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/27, Morath) reports that the Conference Board said Tuesday that its reading of consumer confidence rose to 130.8 in February up from 124.3 the previous month, its highest monthly level since November 2000.

**Quarles: Trump Tax Cuts Could Shift Economy To Higher Growth Trajectory.** [Breitbart](#) (2/27, Carney) reports that Federal Reserve vice chairman for financial supervision Randal Quarles said this week that “it has been quite some time since the economic environment has looked as favorable as it does now. ... There is a real possibility that some of the factors that have been holding back growth in recent years could shift, moving the economy onto a higher growth trajectory. That said, I currently see this shift more as a clear possibility than an unarguable reality.” According to Quarles, the Trump Administration’s tax cuts “deserve some credit for this possible shift.”

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

***"New Yorkers Deserve Action On Ambitious Transit Plans."*** The [New York Times](#) (2/27) reports that New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio should listen to "the public's desire for action" on two recent transportation ideas, congestion pricing and a streetcar line connecting Brooklyn and Queens. The Times says "the congestion pricing concept is years old, and making it a reality is long overdue;" meanwhile, "serious concerns loom" about the streetcar idea, making it uncertain whether de Blasio "will include tens of millions of dollars in start-up money in the proposed budget he must submit to the City Council in a few weeks." The Times asserts that "it's time for the city to show it can think big on transit, and act accordingly."

***"Xi Jinping Dreams Of World Power For Himself And China."*** A [New York Times](#) (2/27) editorial says that since China "began to open to the West in the late 1970s, the United States and its allies have tried to integrate it into the political and economic system they built after World War II, hoping that economic progress would lead eventually to political liberalization." However, the Times argues that Xi's move "proves that policy has failed and that China will set its own path." The American counterbalance, it says, "must be more creative and comprehensive than just starting a trade war, as Mr. Trump is inclined to do. In this regard, the White House's response to Mr. Xi's power grab was not encouraging."

### Washington Post.

***"Apple's Strong Principles Bend To China's Police State."*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/27) says China and Russia, "among other places ruled by strongmen and their political cronies, are demanding that technology companies locate all their data on national soil." This week, Apple agreed to transfer the data of its iCloud customers in China to a center operated by a Chinese company. Apple "will control the encryption keys," but will respond to "valid legal requests" from Chinese authorities for the data of individuals. The Post notes that two years ago, Apple CEO Tim Cook "refused to help the FBI crack open an iPhone used" by a terrorist suspect in San Bernardino, insisting "that it was vital to protect data encryption for privacy." The Post writes, that "when it comes to China, however, Apple says that while it didn't like the new law, it decided to 'remain engaged.'"

***"What To Do About All Those Angry Young Men."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/27) editorializes that "it is not quite right to say that" alleged Florida school shooter Nikolas Cruz "fell through the cracks. The truth is even more unsettling," as "many people" had been "alerted to Mr. Cruz's troubling behavior," including "school officials, police, state social services workers and friends" who "sought to intervene and help." To the Post, "their failure underscores just how difficult it is to deal with mental illness." At any rate, "the law enforcement agencies that interacted with this suspect – or should have, as was the case with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which completely botched a detailed tip — must...face a reckoning," but "when all those reviews are completed, this much will remain true: There will always be an element of human error and unpredictability in these difficult cases." The Post concludes that "that is why an additional reform is so logical: banning weapons of war."

***"If You Beat Your Wife, You Lose Your Gun. That's How It Should Be."*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/27) editorializes that a Montgomery County, MD nonprofit "issued a report in 2015 that found something 'stark and disturbing' in criminal domestic violence cases: Guns were virtually never discussed." Convicted domestic abusers were not "told to surrender any guns." According to the Post, "that finding resulted in legislation three years ago in Maryland that would plug the gap in state law by setting up a mechanism to facilitate the surrender of firearms by convicted domestic abusers," but that legislation has failed to gain traction in the legislature. The Post adds, "the measure is back again this year," and "hopefully, the attention focused on gun control that resulted from the recent tragic events in Florida will help win passage of this needed fix."

### Wall Street Journal.

***"A New GOP Entitlement."*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/27) criticize Republicans for considering the creation of a new entitlement for paid family leave, arguing that given the deficits associated with their latest budget, Republicans should focus on reforming entitlements instead of expanding them.

***"A Genuine Axis Of Evil."*** A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/27) editorial says North Korea's aid to Syria is a sign of the proliferation threat posed by Pyongyang and its continued evasion of UN



sanctions. The Journal argues that if sanctions are going to be effective, the US and its allies will have to start boarding ships suspected of carrying contraband cargo.

*“Democrats And The Dossier.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/27) praises House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes for seeking information about who knew what and when about the Steele dossier. The Journal argues

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

#### *New York Times:*

[Kushner Loses Authority To See Top U.S. Secrets](#)  
[Horror In Syria Has Secret Ties To North Korea](#)  
[N.R.A. Battle Pits Business Against G.O.P.](#)  
[Guns Create A Political Minefield In The Midterms](#)  
[Germany's Car Capital Reels As Court Allows Ban On Cars](#)  
[As Xi Tightens Grip On China, Washington Sees Conflict Ahead](#)

#### *Wall Street Journal:*

[Comcast CEO's Bid To Take Over Sky Scrambles Deals For Fox And Disney](#)  
[UN Links North Korea To Syrian Chemical Weapons](#)  
[Fed's Powell Says His Economic Outlook Has Improved](#)  
[Goldman Sachs, Adviser To The Elite, Wants To Be Your Local Bank](#)

#### *Washington Post:*

[Foreign Officials Sought Leverage Over Kushner](#)  
[Enrollment Questions At DC's Ellington School](#)  
['I'm Never Going To Be The Same'](#)  
[In Dark Corners Of The Web, A Conspiracy Brewed](#)  
[Idaho Tests ACA Bounds, With Audacity](#)

#### *Financial Times:*

[Comcast Threatens Murdoch's Sky Bid With Rival £22bn Proposal](#)  
[Powell Hints At Faster Pace Of Rate Rises](#)  
[Gupta Empire Crumbles In Wake Of Zuma's Departure](#)  
[German Court Says Diesel Cars Can Be Banned From Cities](#)

#### *Washington Times:*

[Hand-picked Judges Unleash Political Weapon On Trump](#)  
[Judge Gives Trump Big Boost For Border Wall](#)  
[School Shootings Down Since Early 1990s](#)  
[German Court Weakens Nation's Diesel Powerhouse](#)  
[Federal Law Stops CDC Studies Of Mental Health In Mass Shootings](#)  
[Russia Acts As 'Arsonist And Fireman' In Syrian War](#)

#### *Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:*

**ABC:** Military-Chemical Envelope; Kushner-Security Clearance; Russia Probe-Hope Hicks; Russia Probe-NSA; Severe Weather; Florida School Shooting; Syrian Civil War-Refugees In Greece; CDC Employee Missing; Construction Site Worker; North Carolina Shooting; Experimental Airplane; Dolly Parton's Book.

**CBS:** Military-Chemical Envelope; Kushner-Security Clearance; Florida School Shooting-Gunman; Florida School Shooting-Students; Syrian Civil War; Border Wall-Legal Ruling; Russia Probe; Israel-Gun Control; Walter Cronkite Reflection; Music Producer.

**NBC:** Russia Election Meddling; Kushner-Security Clearance; Florida School Shooting; WV-Teachers Strike; Syrian Civil War; Online Shopping-Counterfeits; Military-Chemical Envelope; Severe Weather; Tooth Fairy; Emergency First Responder.

#### *Network TV At A Glance:*

Russia Probe – 13 minutes

Kushner-Security Clearance – 7 minutes, 25 seconds

Florida School Shooting – 7 minutes, 25 seconds  
Syrian Civil War – 6 minutes, 5 seconds  
Military-Chemical Envelope – 2 minutes, 45 seconds

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Kushner-Security Clearance; Military-Chemical Envelope; Florida School Shooting; WV Teachers Strike; United-Emergency Landing.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-Gun Control; Border Wall-Legal Ruling; Military-Chemical Envelope; WV Teachers Strike; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Russia Probe; Kushner-Security Clearance; Florida School Shooting; Military-Chemical Envelope.

**NPR:** Florida School Shooting-Gun Control; Kushner-Security Clearance; DACA Policy; Border Wall-Legal Ruling.

## **Washington Schedule**

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### **Today's Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Attends the arrival ceremony preceding the lying in honor of the Reverend Billy Graham; meets with bipartisan Members of Congress to discuss school and community safety.

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — Joins the President to attend the arrival ceremony preceding the lying in honor of the Reverend Billy Graham; joins the President to meet with bipartisan Members of Congress on school and community safety.

**US Senate:** 9:45 AM Senate HELP Committee Executive Session – Executive Session, with agenda including 'S.2434, Animal Drug and Animal Generic Drug User Fee Amendments of 2018', 'S.292, Childhood Cancer STAR Act', 'S.2278, State Offices of Rural Health Reauthorization Act of 2018', and 'S.1091, Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act' Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Public Works Committee hearing on FBI HQ consolidation project – Hearing on 'Oversight: FBI Headquarters Consolidation Project', with testimony from General Services Administration Public Buildings Service Commissioner Dan Matthews; and FBI Finance Division Assistant Director/CFO Richard Haley II \* GSA was originally looking to exchange the J. Edgar Hoover Building in Washington, DC, for a new facility that could accommodate FBI headquarters operations and allow it to consolidate into one location. However, in July 2017, the GSA and FBI canceled the procurement, citing 'an \$882 million funding gap' while saying the cancellation 'does not lessen the need for a new FBI headquarters' and that they would 'continue to work together to address the space requirements of the FBI' Location: Rm 406, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://epw.senate.gov/public/>

10:00 AM House / Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets group – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on 'Legislative Presentation of The American Legion', with testimony from The American Legion National Commander Denise Rohan, National Legislative Commission Chairman Paul Dillard, National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission Chairman Ralph Bozella, National Legislative Division Director Matthew Shuman, National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division Director Louis Celli Jr., Veterans Employment & Education Commission Chairman Randall Fisher, and Veterans Employment & Education Division Director Joseph Sharpe Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

10:00 AM Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including consideration of nomination of Michael Atkinson to be Intelligence Community Inspector General, as well as 'H.R. 2825, Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act' Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 342, Washington, DC <http://hsgac.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SenateHSGAC>

10:00 AM Senate Energy and Natural Resources subcommittee legislative hearing – Water and Power Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'S. 1142 / H.R. 2457 – J. Bennett Johnston Waterway Hydropower Extension Act', 'S. 1556 – Authorized Rural Water Projects Completion Act', 'S. 2074 – A bill to establish a procedure for the conveyance of certain Federal property around the Jamestown Reservoir in the State of North Dakota, and for other purposes', 'S. 2166 – Endangered Fish Recovery Programs Extension Act of 2017', and 'H.R. 2786 – To amend the



Federal Power Act with respect to the criteria and process to qualify as a qualifying conduit hydropower facility', with testimony from Secretary of the Interior's Senior Advisor for Water and Western Resource Issues Alan Mikkelsen Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 366, Washington, DC [www.energy.senate.gov](http://www.energy.senate.gov)

10:00 AM Senate Commerce Committee Executive Session, hearing on PTC implementation – Executive Session, with agenda including 'S. 1520, Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2017', plus the nominations of Joseph Simons to be Federal Trade Commission Commissioner and Chairman-designate, and Noah Joshua Phillips, Christine Wilson, and Rohit Chopra to be FTC Commissioners; and Jeffrey DeWit to be NASA CFO \* Immediately followed by hearing on 'Implementation of Positive Train Control', with testimony from Government Accountability Office Director of Physical Infrastructure Susan Fleming; Department of Transportation Assistant Inspector General Barry DeWeese; Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chief Safety Officer David Mayer; and Amtrak President and CEO Richard Anderson Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 106, Washington, DC <http://commerce.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/SenateCommerce>

2:30 PM POSTPONED: Senate Environment and Public Works subcommittee legislative hearing – POSTPONED: Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'S. 2421, the Fair Agricultural Reporting Method Act' Location: Rm 406, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://epw.senate.gov/public/>

2:30 PM POSTPONED: Secretary of State Tillerson testifies to Senate Foreign Relations Committee on FY'18 budget and redesign plans – POSTPONED: Hearing on 'Review of the FY 2019 State Department Budget Request and Redesign Plans', with testimony from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 419, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

3:00 PM Bipartisan Sens. Jeanne Shaheen and Thom Tillis announce re-establishment of Senate NATO Observer Group – Bipartisan Sens. Jeanne Shaheen and Thom Tillis announce re-establishment of the Senate North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Observer Group, via press conference with NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti \* Group was first established in 1997 by Majority Leader Trent Lott and Minority Leader Tom Daschle to serve as a focal point between the administration, NATO, and the Senate, was re-established in 2002, but was disbanded in 2007. Sens. Shaheen and Tillis will co-chair the new group Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 432, Washington, DC [shaheen.senate.gov](http://shaheen.senate.gov) <https://twitter.com/SenatorShaheen>

3:30 PM Helsinki Commission hearing on murdered Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov – Helsinki Commission hearing on 'Boris Nemtsov, 1959-2015: Seeking Justice, Securing his Legacy', with witnesses – Nemtsov's daughter Zhanna Nemtsova and family lawyer Vadim Prokhorov, and Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom Chairman Vladimir Kara-Murza – examining the outcome of the official investigation into the shooting death of the Russian opposition leader on a bridge in front of the Kremlin in Moscow and of the trial into his assassination, in which an officer of the Russian Interior Ministry was convicted of committing the shooting and four more were sentenced as perpetrators Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 138, Washington, DC <http://www.csce.gov>

Late Rev. Billy Graham lies in honor in the U.S. Capitol – Body of the late Rev. Billy Graham lies in honor in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, with members of the public and Capitol Hill community invited to 'pay their respects to the late reverend while he lies in rest' for two days, following his 21 Feb death at the age of 99. Upon the arrival of the casket, House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell plus President Donald Trump participate in a bicameral service (11:00 AM EST) \* Dubbed 'America's Pastor', the evangelist is said to have preached to 215 million people in 53 countries, twice preaching to crowds of over one million. He provided counsel to 12 sitting U.S. presidents, from Harry Truman to Barack Obama, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1983 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996 \* Graham is only the fourth private citizen to lay in honor at the Capitol, following U.S. Capitol Police officers John Gibson and Jacob Chestnut, who were killed in the line of duty in 1998, and civil rights icon Rosa Parks Location: U.S. Capitol, Rotunda, Washington, DC [www.speaker.gov](http://www.speaker.gov) <https://twitter.com/SpeakerRyan>

**US House:** 9:00 AM House meets in pro forma session – House of Representatives meets in pro forma session, with no votes scheduled in the chamber, as the body of the late Rev. Billy Graham lies in honor in the Rotunda Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

10:00 AM NO LONGER ON CALENDAR: Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee hearing on 'America's Water Resources Infrastructure: Projects and Policies' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2167, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/>

<https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM House / Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets group – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on 'Legislative Presentation of The American Legion', with testimony from The American Legion National Commander Denise Rohan, National Legislative Commission Chairman Paul Dillard, National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission Chairman Ralph Bozella, National Legislative Division Director Matthew Shuman, National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division Director Louis Celli Jr., Veterans Employment & Education Commission Chairman Randall Fisher, and Veterans Employment & Education Division Director Joseph Sharpe Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

10:00 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on combating the opioid crisis – Health Subcommittee hearing on 'Combating the Opioid Crisis: Helping Communities Balance Enforcement and Patient Safety', with testimony from Drug Enforcement Administration Diversion Control Division Deputy Assistant Attorney Susan Gibson; Syracuse Police Department Chief of Police Frank Fowler; Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology Professor Dr Patrick Beardsley; Trillium Institute Director Dr John Mulder; Indivior Chief Medical Officer Dr Ponni Subbiah; California Society of Addiction Medicine President Dr David Kan; Utah County Department of Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Director Richard Nance; Covington and Burling partner Thomas Cosgrove; Brandeis University Co-Director of Opioid Policy Research Dr Andrew Kolodny; and L&S Pharmacy owner Richard Logan Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2123, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:15 AM House Democratic Caucus media availability – House Democratic Caucus Chairman Joe Crowley and Vice Chair Linda Sanchez hold weekly press conference Location: U.S. Capitol, Studio A, Washington, DC <http://www.dems.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseDemocrats>

10:00 AM POSTPONED: House Workforce subcommittee hearing on work in welfare programs – POSTPONED: Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee hearing on 'Strengthening Access and Accountability to Work in Welfare Programs' Location: Rm 2175, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://edworkforce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/EdWorkforce>

10:15 AM POSTPONED: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on 'Update on the Restoration of Puerto Rico's Electric Infrastructure' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2322, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:15 AM NO LONGER ON CALENDAR: House Committee on Natural Resources markup hearing Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

2:00 PM House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on Zimbabwe – Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations Subcommittee hearing on 'Zimbabwe After Mugabe', with testimony from former U.S. Ambassador to Zimbabwe Charles Ray; International Republican Institute Africa Division Regional Deputy Director Elizabeth Lewis; Mike Campbell Foundation Executive Director Ben Freeth; and Amherst College Visiting Assistant Professor Dr Chipso Dendere Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2172, Washington, DC <http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACRepublicans>

2:00 PM House Natural Resources subcommittee legislative hearing – Federal Lands Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'H.R. 1992, Camp Nelson Heritage Park Study Act', 'H.R. 3008, George W. Bush Childhood Home Study Act', 'H.R. 4731, To extend the retained use estate for the Caneel Bay resort in St. John, United States Virgin Islands, and for other purposes', and 'H.R. 5005, To direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the birthplace of James Weldon Johnson in Jacksonville, Florida, as a unit of the National Park System' Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

3:30 PM POSTPONED: House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on USCYBERCOM budget – POSTPONED: Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee hearing on 'A Review and Assessment of the Department of Defense Budget, Strategy, Policy, and Programs for Cyber Operations and U.S. Cyber Command for Fiscal Year 2019', with testimony from National Security Agency Director and U.S. Army Cyber Command Commander Adm. Michael Rogers; and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security Kenneth Rapuano Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2212, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://armedservices.house.gov)

<https://twitter.com/HASCRepublicans>

3:30 PM Helsinki Commission hearing on murdered Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov – Helsinki Commission hearing on 'Boris Nemtsov, 1959-2015: Seeking Justice, Securing his Legacy', with witnesses – Nemtsov's daughter Zhanna Nemtsova and family lawyer Vadim Prokhorov, and Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom Chairman Vladimir Kara-Murza – examining the outcome of the official investigation into the shooting death of the Russian opposition leader on a bridge in front of the Kremlin in Moscow and of the trial into his assassination, in which an officer of the Russian Interior Ministry was convicted of committing the shooting and four more were sentenced as perpetrators Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 138, Washington, DC <http://www.csce.gov>

Late Rev. Billy Graham lies in honor in the U.S. Capitol – Body of the late Rev. Billy Graham lies in honor in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, with members of the public and Capitol Hill community invited to 'pay their respects to the late reverend while he lies in rest' for two days, following his 21 Feb death at the age of 99. Upon the arrival of the casket, House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell plus President Donald Trump participate in a bicameral service (11:00 AM EST) \* Dubbed 'America's Pastor', the evangelist is said to have preached to 215 million people in 53 countries, twice preaching to crowds of over one million. He provided counsel to 12 sitting U.S. presidents, from Harry Truman to Barack Obama, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1983 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996 \* Graham is only the fourth private citizen to lay in honor at the Capitol, following U.S. Capitol Police officers John Gibson and Jacob Chestnut, who were killed in the line of duty in 1998, and civil rights icon Rosa Parks Location: U.S. Capitol, Rotunda, Washington, DC [www.speaker.gov](http://www.speaker.gov) <https://twitter.com/SpeakerRyan>

**Other:** 8:00 AM The Atlantic forum on the women and children in the criminal justice system – The Atlantic hosts 'Defining Justice: The Experience of Women and Children Behind Bars' – a forum on the state of criminal justice reform across the nation, and how it impacts women and youth in particular. Speakers include Democratic Sen. Cory Booker, 'Orange is the New Black' author Piper Kerman, Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy, Maryland Correctional Institution for Women Warden Margaret Chippendale, Koch Industries Senior Vice President and General Counsel Mark Holden, The Ladies of Hope Ministries founder and Executive Director Topeka Sam, and Google Vice President of Public Policy & Government Affairs Susan Molinari Location: National Union Building, 918 F St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.theatlantic.com/> <https://twitter.com/TheAtlantic>

8:00 AM CSIS Strategic National Security Space: FY19 Budget Forum – Strategic National Security Space: FY19 Budget Forum, hosted by Center for Strategic and International Studies Aerospace Security Project and Defense Budget Analysis Project, addressing the dynamic national security space landscape including the release of the Trump administration's Fiscal Year 2019 budget, the evolving threat environment, and changes in the organization of the national security space enterprise. Speakers include Republican Rep. Mike Rogers and Democratic Rep. Jim Cooper Location: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.csis.org> <https://twitter.com/CSIS>

10:00 AM CTA 5G Day, with FCC commissioner – Consumer Technology Association 5G Day, with Federal Communications Commission Commissioner Brendan Carr delivering remarks on 'how the U.S. can lead the global race for 5G' Location: Wilkinson Barker Knauer, 1800 M St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.cta.tech/> <https://twitter.com/CTATech>

11:30 AM Dem Sen. Chris Coons discusses national security threats and opportunities at Hudson Institute – Hudson Institute hosts discussion with Democratic Sen. Chris Coons on national security threats and opportunities, including the future of the Middle East, Russia and Transatlantic relations, the challenges of a rising China, prospects for Sub-Saharan Africa, and other concerns facing American policymakers today and in the years ahead Location: Hudson Institute, 1201 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.hudson.org> <https://twitter.com/HudsonInstitute>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Stephen Colbert:** "This afternoon, first son-in-law Jared Kushner was denied his security clearance and has lost access to top secret intelligence. What?! What?! What's wrong with you people? How will he fix the Middle East now?"

**Stephen Colbert:** "[Hope] Hicks is a close adviser to the President and has been with him since the campaign, so her testimony would provide key insight to investigators. So, of course, she refused to answer any questions about events and conversations that occurred since Trump took office. One committee member said, 'We got Bannoned.'"

**Stephen Colbert:** "There's no doubt in any of the intelligence agencies that Russia did everything it could to influence the 2016 election, from effective methods, like Facebook ads and Twitter bots, to total dead ends, like Don Jr."

**James Corden:** "The President's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, had his security clearance downgraded today. That means he won't have access to top secret documents. So I guess now Trump and Kushner won't be reading the daily intelligence briefing."

**James Corden:** "Former First Lady Michelle Obama has announced that her memoir, entitled 'Becoming,' will be published in November. The book will cover some of the most exciting times in Michelle Obama's life, like that time she got \$65 million to write a memoir."

**Trevor Noah:** [Referring to West Virginia teachers' strike] "Over the past week, the discussion in America has been, should we give teachers guns or should we not give teachers guns? And teachers have been like, 'Uh, first, can you give us pay?' ... If there's one thing we can agree on, teachers should never be on food stamps, because if they're hungry, they can't shoot straight."

**Trevor Noah:** "Now Kushner will have to learn about the nation's most sensitive secrets just like the rest of us: wait for Trump to tweet them out. Oh, man, it has to be so humiliating for Kushner. ... Gen. Kelly, in meetings, will be like, 'What do we do about the n-u-k-e-s?'"

**Trevor Noah:** "For his 2020 campaign, President Trump hired [Brad Parscale]. [shows image of Parscale] Look at this guy. I'm pretty sure I've seen him in every movie. I've seen him get killed in every Jason Bourne movie ever. Congratulations, Brad. You are new campaign manager. Just don't ask what happened to the last one or the one before that or that. But otherwise, good times!"

**Jimmy Fallon:** "President Trump is expected to announce that he's running for reelection in 2020. He's even got a great slogan: 'Pretend the last four years never happened.' That's right, Trump is running for reelection. He said that he'll be sticking with Mike Pence as a cellmate, I mean, running mate."

**Seth Meyers:** "According to Politico, Senior White House Adviser Jared Kushner lost his top secret security clearance on Friday, because as it turns out, you have to be 18!"

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**Date:** Tuesday, February 27, 2018 6:22:01 AM

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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- Sierra (CA) Sun Times: Secretary Zinke Announces \$60 Million Cooperative Agreement To Promote Fishing And Boating And \$14 Million In Boating Infrastructure Grants.
- Tampa Bay (FL) Times: Zinke: Bill Nelson Should Be Thanking Me For Protecting Florida From Drilling.
- Washington Post: Interior Dept. Panel Weighs Lower Royalty Payments For Offshore Oil And Gas Drilling.
- Reuters: U.S. Energy Drilling Boom Could Mean \$6 Billion In Federal Well Cleanups.
- The Guardian (UK): Dozens Of Public Lands Advocates Say Trump Administration 'Shut Them Out'.

- Wisconsin Gazette: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke Wins 2017 Rubber Dodo Award.

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## DOI In The News

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### Wyoming To Have About \$91 Million In AML Money Available.

The [AP](#) (2/26) reports that the Interior Department is "providing about \$91.3 million to help reclaim abandoned coal mines in Wyoming." The funds come from the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement through Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation grants.

The [Wyoming Business Report](#) (2/26) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, "Restoring the usability of abandoned mine lands is an example of the Department of the Interior's multiple-use mission of conservation in action. Interior will continue helping states and tribes responsibly develop America's energy resources and address legacy problems related to 200 years of mining. AML grants keep Americans working and making a difference in their communities. This money will be used to fix highwalls, stabilize land above underground mines and repair impaired waters, among other things. AML reclamation makes life better in our Nation's coal communities."

Indiana Receiving \$8.1M In US Grants For Mine Reclamation. The [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/26) reports that Indiana will receive \$8.1 million in grants to reclaim abandoned coal mines. The grants are "among more than \$300 million in mine reclamation funding available to states and tribes in federal fiscal year 2018."

More Than \$2.8-million Earmarked To Reclaim And Repurpose Abandoned Coal Mines In Utah. [KSTU-TV](#) Salt Lake City (2/26, Thomas) reports that grants from the Interior Department will "provide \$2,802,000 to Utah to reclaim abandoned coal mines."

### Secretary Zinke Announces \$60 Million Cooperative Agreement To Promote Fishing And Boating And \$14 Million In Boating Infrastructure Grants.

The [Sierra \(CA\) Sun Times](#) (2/26) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "announced a \$60 million cooperative agreement with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) to help retain and recruit recreational anglers and boaters of all ages." Zinke is "also announcing \$14 million in Boating Infrastructure Grants (BIG), which support water-related outdoor recreation and tourism by improving facilities for large transient recreational boats across the country." Zinke said, "Outdoor recreation is a key part of our American heritage, and boating and fishing in particular are how many Americans enjoy our public waters. The new cooperative agreement with RBFF is going to make sure we are reaching new anglers and boaters from all ages to get out on the water. The BIG grants help ensure that those new recreationists, as well as those who have enjoyed these activities for years, experience improved access to fishing opportunities with safer and more user-friendly recreational boating facilities."

*Fernandina Beach Could Get \$1.5 Million In Fed Funds For Dock.* The [Fernandina Beach \(FL\) News-Leader](#) (2/26, Davis) reports that the Interior Department "announced on Friday that Florida will receive a Boating Infrastructure Grant of \$2,091,648." Most of the funds, \$1.5 million, could go to Fernandina Beach, and "the rest could go to the city of Marco Island for new floating docks at Rose Marina."

### Zinke: Bill Nelson Should Be Thanking Me For Protecting Florida From Drilling.

The [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (2/26, Leary) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke defended himself from criticism by Sen. Bill Nelson and others "of his decision to exempt Florida from the administration's offshore oil drilling plan." Zinke said, "There's a federal moratorium off Florida. And in Florida, every member, both Republican and Democrat, were vehemently against offshore. ... It's not capricious or arbitrary." He continued, "You would think the opposition would have thanked me ... Senator Nelson would have said hey, 'Thank you Interior for taking it off the table.' I guess in a political environment people criticize me for no matter what I do. It's OK. I'm going



to do the right thing.”

### **Interior Dept. Panel Weighs Lower Royalty Payments For Offshore Oil And Gas Drilling.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/25, Eilperin) reports that the Royalty Policy Committee at the Interior Department is “considering whether the federal government should sharply cut the royalty rate that oil and gas firms pay for deepwater drilling while expediting energy development on federal land in Alaska and elsewhere.” The [Houston Chronicle](#) (2/26, Osborne) reports that the proposal, “which would slice the royalty rate by one-third, aims to encourage more drilling in the Gulf, a mature field where energy companies must move into deeper and riskier waters to find and produce oil and gas.” The recommendations by members of the committee will be taken up Wednesday. It would then go to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke for a final decision.

### **U.S. Energy Drilling Boom Could Mean \$6 Billion In Federal Well Cleanups.**

[Reuters](#) (2/26, Volcovici) reports that according to an analysis done by ECONorthwest, “cleaning up the tens of thousands oil and gas wells on U.S. federal land after they stop producing could cost over \$6 billion, and taxpayers may need to pitch in.” The study “reflects one of the downsides to a years-long drilling boom that has made the United States a top world oil and gas producer.” The analysis “estimates the potential reclamation costs for the 94,096 oil and gas wells now producing on federal lands at \$6.1 billion.” The study suggests “the figure is likely several times higher than the amount the government has collected from oil and gas companies for the purposes of well reclamation – and taxpayers could be liable for some of the difference.”

### **Dozens Of Public Lands Advocates Say Trump Administration ‘Shut Them Out’.**

[The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (2/26, Gee) report that the Trump Administration has “angered ranchers, hunters, fishermen and conservationists across the US who complain they are being shut out of a federal advisory process designed to steer the management of cherished public lands.” According to the article, “many of the dozens of public advisory boards have been stonewalled by the department of interior since the president put Ryan Zinke at the helm of the agency.” In a letter sent Thursday to Zinke, “23 members of public-lands advisory groups in Colorado said they were ‘dismayed’ and felt ‘disenfranchised’ by their ‘inability to perform in our official role’, and that some had not met in over a year.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Vice](#) (2/26, Duhaime-Ross).

### **Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke Wins 2017 Rubber Dodo Award.**

The [Wisconsin Gazette](#) (2/26) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is “the winner of the Center for Biological Diversity’s 2017 Rubber Dodo award, presented to the person who has most aggressively sought to destroy America’s natural heritage or drive endangered species extinct.” Kieran Suckling, the center’s executive director, said, “Ryan Zinke seems to wake up every day wondering how he can tear apart America’s public lands, ramp up oil and gas development and put endangered species on a fast track to extinction.” Suckling added, “Zinke’s an extension of Trump’s greed, callousness and corporate cronyism. It’s hard to imagine anyone else who has done more this year to drive our environment straight into the ditch, along with the future of America’s wildlife and public lands.”

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Supreme Court To Decide Three Tribal Rights Cases This Term.**

The [Inside Sources](#) (2/26, Mundahl) reports that this term, the Supreme Court will consider “three cases involving tribal rights: Upper Skagit Indian Tribe v. Lundgren, Washington v. United States, and Patchak v. Zinke.” According to the article, “cases involving Indian law...are appearing more regularly on the court’s calendar.” They are “significant for tribal rights groups, who have been struggling to preserve tribal sovereignty and jurisdiction in the face of legal rulings that have limited the areas over which tribal governments can exercise their authority.”

### **Rival Factions Of Cayuga Tribe Spar For Control.**

[Courthouse News](#) (2/26, Eakin) reports that “a group of Cayuga Indians whom the United States recognized as the New York tribe’s governing body can intervene in the challenge to that designation filed by a rival faction, a federal judge ruled.” U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly granted the request on Friday, “saying that the council has standing because it could

suffer irreparable harm if the court rules in favor of the clan mothers.” The judge “rejected the challengers’ argument that the council would not be harmed by the outcome of the case because it had already received the funds from a Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act contract, which were granted as a result of the results of the mail-in survey.”

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **BLM Removes 1,000-Plus Horses From Nevada Range.**

The [Elko \(NV\) Daily Free Press](#) (2/26) reports that the Bureau of Land Management “concluded a wild horse gather on Feb. 23 within the overpopulated Triple B Complex in Eastern Nevada. The BLM removed 1,294 wild horses.” According to the article, “twenty-eight mares were treated with PZP and released, along with 28 studs, back to the range.” Also, “three mares and foals were released, for a total of 62.”

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Drilling Opponents Converge On North Carolina Federal Meeting.**

The [AP](#) (2/26, Robertson) reports “hundreds of environmentalists” opposing a “Trump administration proposal to expand offshore drilling in the Atlantic and other ocean waters” gathered Monday in North Carolina at “the federal government’s only public meeting for input.” The proposal “would open 90 percent of the nation’s offshore reserves to development by private companies between 2019 and 2024.” According to the AP, “conservative activists and representatives of the energy industry held their own news conference at the hotel to urge expansion.”

Also reporting are the [Wilmington \(NC\) Star News](#) (2/26, Wagner), the [Raleigh \(NC\) News & Observer](#) (2/26, Doran), the [New Bern \(NC\) Sun Journal](#) (2/26, Hand), the [Coastal Review](#) (2/27, Ross), [WNCN-TV Raleigh-Durham \(NC\)](#) Raleigh-Durham, NC (2/26, Richardson), [WRAL-TV Raleigh \(NC\)](#) Raleigh, NC (2/26, Sweat), [WUNC-FM Chapel Hill \(NC\)](#) Chapel Hill, NC (2/26, Morrison), [WECT-TV Wilmington \(NC\)](#) Wilmington, NC (2/26, Donovan), and [WITN-TV Greenville \(NC\)](#) Greenville, NC (2/26).

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **‘Cloud Seeding’ May Make It Snow, But Will It Reduce Droughts In The West?**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/23, Quinton) reports that “worsening water scarcity, combined with new evidence that ‘cloud seeding’ can work, is spurring states, counties, water districts and power companies across the thirsty West to use the strategy.” In Colorado, “more than 100 cloud seeding machines are set up in mountainside back yards, fields and meadows.” The program, “which costs \$1 million a year, is paid for not just by the state, ski resorts and local water users but also by water districts as far away as Los Angeles that want to increase snowmelt into the Colorado River, which sustains more than 30 million people across the Southwest.”

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Rare Death Valley Plant Grows Its Way Off Endangered Species List.**

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/26, Brean) reports that “one rare desert plant has been removed from the endangered species list and another has been ‘down-listed,’ thanks to successful recovery efforts in Death Valley National Park.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “announced Monday that it is ‘delisting’ the Eureka Valley evening-primrose and upgrading the status of Eureka dune grass from endangered to the less-imperiled threatened status.” Death Valley Superintendent Mike Reynolds said in a written statement, “It’s an exciting success story that both species are in less danger of extinction than they were a few decades ago. This is due to things like wilderness protection, moving designated campsites away from the plants’ habitat, and adding signs to explain how to recreate at Eureka Dunes without harming the unique plants.”

### **Trump’s Budget Cuts Whooping Crane Breeding Program, But Texas’ Population Largely Spared.**

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (2/26, Stuckey) reports that "Texas' whooping crane population largely will be insulated from President Donald Trump's proposal to ax the endangered birds' breeding program – for now, at least." Earlier this month, Trump released his budget proposal, "which would slash a number of programs designed to prevent the extinction of species, such as the \$1.5 million Patuxent whooping crane breeding program." According to Stephanie Kurose, endangered species policy specialist at the Center for Biological Diversity, "the flock that travels 2,600 miles to the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge from Canada every winter is the largest of four North American flocks and the only one that is self sustaining." The article says "that means Texas' flock – last winter the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated it was 431 strong, up from 254 during the 2011-2012 winter – does not depend on Patuxent's captive bred cranes to continue to exist."

## **National Park Service**

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### **Schedule Clash Prompts Search For New Gun Protest Site In DC.**

The [AP](#) (2/26) reports that "a National Parks Services spokesman says a gun violence march in D.C. set for March 24 needs a new site." According to National Park Service spokesman Mike Litterst, "March for Our Lives submitted a permit to hold the protest at the National Mall on March 24, but that day has already been reserved." Litterst "says a filming permit was requested for some of the same areas march organizers requested. He says his agency is working with the group to find another space."

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Hurricanes Left Behind Mountains Of Trash In The Virgin Islands – And There's Nowhere To Put It.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/22, Craig) reports "after back-to-back hurricanes pinwheeled across the Virgin Islands in September," the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and "local contractors have collected more than 736,000 cubic yards of debris – the equivalent of 61,000 truckloads – as they rush to clean up St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix, the territory's three major islands." According to the article, "as the mountains of wreckage continue to grow, crowding landfills and littering roadsides, debate has raged over how to get rid of the detritus tarnishing the islands' famous Caribbean landscapes." Meanwhile, Virgin Islands Gov. Kenneth Mapp "fears the heaps of debris are not only an eyesore but also a major fire hazard on these islands with limited firefighting resources."

### **Local Students Debate Politics And Meet Influential Leaders At Junior Statesmen Winter Congress Convention.**

The [Virgin Islands Consortium \(VIR\)](#) (2/27) reports that "a delegation of eight Virgin Islands high school students recently attended the Junior State of America's (JSA) 'MidSoHio' (Midwest, Southeast & Ohio River Valley) Winter Congress Convention in Washington, DC, and brought home one of the coveted Best Speaker Gavels, a release issued late Monday." The students "spent five days in the nation's capital, where they debated dozens of student-drafted bills during a mock-legislative session, visited cultural landmarks, and met with influential leaders including Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett, Congressman and Civil Rights pioneer John Lewis, and Douglas Domenech, assistant secretary for Insular Areas at the Department of the Interior." On February 16th, the group visited the Interior Department and "met with the leaders of the Office of Insular Affairs, including Assistant Secretary Douglas Domenech, Policy Director Basil Ottley, and Technical Assistance Director Charlene Leizear."

### **VIPA Bringing Airports Up To Pre-Hurricane Status.**

[St. Croix Source](#) (2/26, Buchanan) reports that testifying Friday before the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture, Tourism Commissioner Beverly Nicholson-Doty said airline travel is "beginning to bounce back." However, "her good news in the morning session of the meeting was tempered by the testimony of L. Damian Cartwright, assistant executive director/director of engineering at V. I. Port Authority(VIPA), in the afternoon." According to Cartwright, "the VIPA sustained more than \$85 million in hurricane-related damages to its port facilities."

### **35 Vessels Get Painted Orange Thanks To Coast Guard.**

The [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (2/24) reports that "the Coast Guard Cutter Kiska, home ported in Santa Rita, Guam, recently conducted community outreach in Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia in an effort to improve boater safety." The Coast Guard Sector Guam "conducted a rescue of three fisherman which were located 85 nautical miles from Chuuk earlier this week." According to the article, "to ensure continued success of this program, the Kiska conducted another Orange Boat Initiative event in Chuuk, which resulted in 35 vessels receiving high-contrast orange interiors." The article notes that "since the program's start in the summer of 2015, more than 400 privately-owned skiffs have orange interior paint schemes, greatly enhancing detectability by search aircraft."

### **Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands Face Painful Hurricane Recovery.**

The [Jamaica Observer](#) (2/22) reports that "the US territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands will need to take painful actions to restore their economies amid the hurricane devastation, New York Federal Reserve President William Dudley said Thursday." According to Dudley, "the island territories, especially Puerto Rico, already faced dire economic realities even before hurricanes slammed into them late last summer, but the recovery now is complicated by shrinking populations, high debt, high unemployment and plunging growth."

### **American Samoa Mulling On Whether To Ask US For Funds.**

[Radio New Zealand](#) (2/26) reports that "America Samoa's governor is still mulling whether or not to ask the US president to declare a state of disaster in the territory, as authorities complete their initial assessments after Cyclone Gita." America Samoa "experienced severe flooding and landslides in the cyclone, which wiped out some essential infrastructure and crops a fortnight ago." A spokesperson for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Victor Inge, "said the scale of the damage – and the cost – is still to be determined."

### **Calvo Touts Deportation Of Migrant Convicts.**

The [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/24, Roberto) reports that "during his State of the Island address on Feb. 13, Gov. Eddie Calvo underscored the millions of dollars Guam saves by commuting the sentences of criminal migrants." According to Calvo, the Department of Corrections spends "\$119 a day to house each detainee and inmate at its correctional facilities." So far, Calvo said, "more than 40 non-U.S. citizens have had their sentences commuted and have been sent back to their country of origin – which include Peru, the Philippines and the Federated States of Micronesia." He said, "If we had to house these criminals until the date of their scheduled release, it would have cost taxpayers roughly \$3 million."

### **USNS Mercy Deploys In Support Of Pacific Partnership 2018.**

[DVIDS Hub](#) (2/23, Burford) reports, "Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) departed San Diego today in support of the humanitarian mission to Southeast Asia, Pacific Partnership 2018." The ship's crew will "visit countries throughout Southeast Asia to include Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam." Mercy will "provide medical, dental, veterinary, public health services, engineering and disaster response to host countries who have invited the ship to visit and provide services to the local population."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Magnitude-7.5 Quake Strikes Papua New Guinea.**

[CNN](#) (2/26, Cullinane) reports that "authorities in Papua New Guinea are assessing the damage after a magnitude-7.5 earthquake struck the Pacific country early Monday." The US Geological Survey "said the quake hit at 3:45 a.m. local time (12:45 p.m. ET Sunday) near Porgera, northwest of the capital Port Moresby."

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Wastewater Injections Set Off A Kansas Earthquake Binge.* [Ars Technica](#) (2/26, JOHNSON).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Budget Proposal's Prescription To Heal National Parks Is A Poison Pill.**

In an editorial, the [Las Vegas Sun](#) (2/26) argues that taking a "a broader view" of President Trump's budget proposal reveals a threat to national parks. The paper observes that "while Trump recommends spending \$18.7 billion to fix a massive maintenance backlog, which would seem like a good idea, the problem is that all but \$257 million of that funding would come from private industries that would be given access to the parks to use for commercial purposes – mainly oil and gas companies." The paper does not believe that Congress will ultimately pass Trump's budget, but it says "it does offer a look at how the administration is thinking about the parks system, and more importantly what Trump's special-interest controllers are demanding from him."

### **For Our Country's Veterans, Access To Public Lands Represents Freedom.**

In an op-ed for the [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (2/26, Werkheiser), Joshua Werkheiser, a Montana veteran who served in the Army with the 509th Airborne Infantry, writes about the importance of public lands are "those who served this country in the armed services" and calls for a stop to the Trump Administration's "attack on our monuments." According to Werkheiser, "the relationship between our protected lands and veterans is deep and mutually beneficial." In particular, Werkheiser finds Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's actions "disappointing" because "Commander Zinke should know as well as anyone as an outdoorsman and veteran the value of protecting land and ensuring that outdoor access is preserved, not limited."

### **For Coal Miners, It's Time To Exit Or Get Rich: Russell.**

Clyde Russell argues in a column for [Reuters](#) (2/26, Russell) that coal miners seem to be "adopting one of two disparate strategies, either exit the business in a highly visible way to buff up your climate credentials, or sit tight, keep as quiet as possible and rake in the cash." World Coal Association CEO Benjamin Sporton recently told Reuters in an interview that, in Russell's words, "coal producers acknowledge that the market is shrinking in Europe and faces a huge challenge from cheap natural gas in the United States, Asia is presenting good opportunities." Russell concludes, "For coal miners who can take the heat of the public opinion kitchen these are good times. For those who no longer see coal as part of the future, they can sell out, at prices higher than what they might have expected a few years, and at the same time hopefully gain some climate-change credibility."

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Increased Revenue Sharing Of Offshore Energy Makes Good Consumer Sense.* [Daily Caller](#) (2/26, Kandrach).
- *OPINION: Judge Strikes Down Sec. Zinke's Delay Of Methane Waste Rule.* [Pagosa \(CO\) Daily Post](#) (2/26, Bowie).
- *Guest Opinion: Trump's Budget Would Hurt Montana's Outdoor Economy.* [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/26, Findley).
- *From Utah's Red Rock Desert, A Call For Protecting Our Public Lands.* [Yale University \(CT\) Environment 360](#) (2/26, Williams).
- *Ryan Zinke Wrong That Gas Prices Are Down 40% Under Trump.* [PolitiFact](#) (2/26, Jacobson).

## **Top National News**

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### **Trump Vows To Turn "Grief Into Action," Signals He Will "Fight" NRA If Need Be.**

Media coverage of a White House discussion on gun violence between the President and a group of governors included reports on all three network newscasts and extensive print reporting. Overall, the tone of the coverage is somewhat favorable, highlighting the policy discussions and Trump's seeming willingness to take on the NRA. The cautiously favorable tone was not universal: On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/26, lead story, 3:50, Muir), for example, Jonathan Karl reported Trump says "he's willing to take on the NRA...but...has not supported a single piece of legislation, a single bill, that the NRA opposes." A [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/26, Parsons) report, meanwhile, accuses Trump of causing "momentum" for reform to bog down "in part because of his shifting statements" as he "made policy on the fly in front of television cameras, revealing the fluidity of his thinking as well as the influence of the NRA."

[Politico](#) (2/26, Lima), meanwhile, notes Trump "told state leaders they had 'nothing to be



afraid of' from the influential gun-rights organization as officials try to respond to this month's deadly school shooting," and "he promised to 'fight them' if the NRA opposed his efforts to prevent future attacks." Said Trump, "You guys, half of you are so afraid of the NRA. There's nothing to be afraid of." [Reuters](#) (2/26, Rampton) reports Trump then added, "That's OK. They're doing what they think is right."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/26, story 2, 2:10, Glor) also noted Trump urged the governors "not to fear the gun lobby." At any rate, says the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/26, Parsons), the President recounted that "he had lunch during the weekend with key" NRA leaders, "including Wayne LaPierre and Chris Cox, and said the NRA officials 'want to do something' to address the issue." According to the [Washington Times](#) (2/26, Boyer), what Trump said was that he told the NRA officials "we need to do something." The Times adds that "Trump seemed delighted that the media didn't find out about the lunch."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/26, lead story, 3:50, Muir) connected the lunch with Trump's policy prescriptions, reporting that "one idea the President has embraced would require a fight: a plan to raise the minimum age for buying a rifle from 18 to 21. The NRA opposes the idea, and since the lunch with the President, he hasn't mentioned it." Hallie Jackson of [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/26, lead story, 2:35, Holt) also said there "no mention of" raising the age of eligibility, "an idea he likes that the NRA does not." Likewise, the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/26, story 2, 2:10, Glor) reported that Trump "did not reiterate the call to bump up the age of purchase to 21," but added that "the White House says he does still support the concept and denies that a meeting on Sunday with the head of the NRA softened his stance."

[NPR](#) (2/26, Horsley) noted White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders later "told reporters Trump still supports the 'concept,'" and [Politico](#) (2/26, Lima) quotes her as saying, "It is something that is still being discussed," though "a 'final determination' on the exact policy had not yet been made."

[TIME](#) (2/26, Berenson) reports that Trump "said above all, he wants to break the cycle of talking about reforms in the wake of a mass shooting and then 'all of a sudden everybody is off to the next subject.'" Added Trump, "We'll turn our grief into action." [Newsweek](#) (2/26, Tennent) quotes the President as further telling the governors, "The country is doing well, and then we have a setback like this that's so heart-wrenching." Trump "claimed that his administration is 'setting records on the economy,' including historically low unemployment for black and Hispanic people."

Bianna Golodryga said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/26), "It seems that he is back and forth depending on what day or what time you talk to him about the issue. He said today that the NRA, you can negotiate with them and if we don't agree, we don't agree. It is not as easy as that and I think he knows it. He spent the majority of last week talking about how he supported raising the age to buy guns from 18 to 21. You didn't hear much about that today. You heard him emphasize bump stocks. So maybe that was some sort of compromise he could get out of them over the weekend."

Dan Balz of the Washington Post said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/26), "I think it's still going to be difficult. I think they are still miles apart on some of these issues. I think it will be partly determined by how much people try to do. If they can go leaner and simpler, maybe they can do something on background checks, but beyond that, I don't know what they are going to be able to do. These standoffs have existed for a long time. The NRA has been very successful in blocking efforts in the past after other shootings. I think a lot of it will have to do with what role the President chooses to play, how effective he is."

White House Deputy Press Secretary Hogan Gidley said on [Fox News' Ingraham Angle](#) (2/26), "Democrats in these times...go immediately to ending the Second Amendment and taking our guns. Let the government protect you. We have seen what the government did at the FBI, we saw what it did at the local level, and now we saw deputies outside who were trained and had guns and didn't go in. So, if it comes down to I get to protect myself with my own gun or I am going to let the government do it, I'll take myself every day of the week."

Eric Trump said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (2/26), "I'm the biggest Second Amendment person there is. I'm a big believer in it. At the same time, we can't have our kids get shot up in schools. You need to do certain things. There were so many red flags on this kid. There were so many red flags. Nothing was done about it. I think you need to go in there, you need to have even greater background checks." Trump added, "There are things that have to be done. At the same time, this isn't just a gun problem. It's really not a gun problem. It's a mental health problem in this country. Right? It's a societal problem."

Rep. Jim Himes (D-CT) said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (2/26), "The one piece of this...that

is different and interesting is the fact that apparently, the President is pushing this hard and apparently he spent the weekend talking to Republicans in the Congress saying I want to do something here. Now I've been through this before after Sandy Hook. We thought for sure something was going to change and nothing changed so the resistance of people like Mitch McConnell and Paul Ryan can still stop things from happening but it's interesting to see a Republican President apparently working the phones to try to get something done so we'll see this week whether anything happens."

Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX) said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/26), "I hope that [Trump] will do what he has talked about. Ban bump stocks, raise the age of purchase to 21, and do other things that the Congress should do. I think we should either ban assault weapons or at least high capacity magazines so that somebody can't fire off 20 rounds, and put ten bullets in somebody before they had a chance to react. A lot of work to be done." Castro added, "I think there's more momentum right now. You see even among the public that you have 70 percent in support of more gun reform. And really, if the President and Mitch McConnell and Paul Ryan were committed to do something more than talk, they could get something done. They could pass a Bill on the House floor and the Senate floor tomorrow, or this week, if they wanted to."

**Trump Says He May Have Taken On Shooter Unarmed.** Much noted – and criticized – in the coverage was a comment by Trump to the governors, uttered as part of his discussion of the law enforcement response to the shooting. The [AP](#) (2/26, Thomas) notes Trump said, "You don't know until you're tested, but I think I really believe I'd run in there even if I didn't have a weapon, and I think most of the people in this room would have done that, too." The AP adds that "Trump's heroic hypothetical vividly demonstrated his frustration at the way the deadly events unfolded at the school in Parkland."

[Roll Call](#) (2/26, Bennett) indicates Trump "criticized Florida law enforcement officers who did not enter the Parkland high school," and the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/26, Parsons) that he "again found fault with the officers who didn't stop the gunman who carried out the massacre," telling the governors, "They really weren't exactly Medal of Honor winners." The [New York Daily News](#) (2/26, Rayman) notes Trump added, "I think most of the people in this room would have done that too. I know most of you. But the way they performed was really a disgrace."

[USA Today](#) (2/26, Jackson) noted that "asked if Trump has had firearms training himself," Sanders said, "I don't think that was the point he was making; he was saying that he would be a leader and would want to take a courageous action." [Politico](#) (2/26, Lima) reports Sanders "later added that Trump's remarks signaled a desire to 'play a role' in protecting students at the school." Said Sanders, "He was just stating that as a leader he would have stepped in and hopefully been able to help."

[Yahoo! News](#) (2/26, Stableford), however, reported that in "a 2008 interview with Howard Stern, Trump told the shock jock that he turned away from an injured elderly man who had fallen off the stage at a Mar-a-Lago benefit because he 'couldn't stomach the sight of blood.'" Trump told Stern, "This guy falls off right on his face, hits his head, and I thought he died. ... And you know what I did? I said, 'Oh, my God, that's disgusting,' and I turned away. I couldn't, you know, he was right in front of me and I turned away. I didn't want to touch him."

Gloria Borger said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/26), "It is just so typical of Donald Trump to turn this national tragedy into something about him, which is, 'Okay. I watched those guys. And you know what? I would have run into the building. I would have done that.' So it is always about Donald Trump. I think it was, you know, just ridiculous. And Sarah Sanders, I guess, just had to dance as fast as she could."

Chris Cillizza said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/26), "There is a Walter Mitty quality to Donald Trump in that he has spent almost his entire adult life writing a story about a brave, fearsome, tough guy...cool guy named Donald Trump. So in a way it is not really new. He says in that line, none of us can really know until that moment, but I think I would. This is in line with creating a spokesman named John Miller in the 1980s, who called the gossip tabloids and talked about how cool and desirable Donald Trump was. It was Donald Trump. It is in line with many of the things he said during the campaign were not borne out. It is in line with him talking about how wealthy he is when the reality suggests he is much less wealthy. He is a fabulist at some level. He tells himself the story he wants to believe about his own past, present and future."

**Trump Says He Will Ban Bump Stocks By Executive Action.** [Voice of America](#) (2/26) reported that Trump "told the nation's governors he will sign an order banning the sale of bump stocks no matter what Congress does or doesn't do." Said the President, "The bullets come out fast, but you don't know where they're going. So, we're going to get rid of them. ... I don't care if Congress acts. I'm writing it out myself."



The [Washington Post](#) (2/26, Gearan) quotes Trump as saying, "We're getting rid of it. You put it into the machine-gun category, which is what it is." [Politico](#) (2/26, Alexander) reports the President further stated, "You do a rule, have to wait 90 days. ... That's sort of what's happening with bump stocks. It's gone, don't worry about it. It's gone, essentially gone, because we are going to make it so tough, you're not going to be able to get them. Nobody's going to want them anyway."

[McClatchy](#) (2/26, Kumar) reports Trump "signed a memorandum ordering Attorney General Jeff Sessions to craft regulations to ban 'bump stocks' and other devices that turn semi-automatic firearms into automatic weapons." McClatchy adds that "Republicans and Democrats had called for bump stocks to be regulated after it was used by a shooter to kill 58 people at a music festival in Las Vegas in October."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (2/26, Lim) reports Gov. John Kasich "on Monday said...Trump should be applauded his stance against bump stocks." Said Kasich, "When he says that they're going to have to eliminate these bump stocks – and for those that are watching, of course, that allows a semi- to act like a fully automatic weapon – that he'd write the order himself. If he follows through on that, it's fantastic."

***Trump Objects To Media Characterization Of His Call To Arm Some Teachers.*** The [AP](#) (2/26, Thomas) reports Trump told the governors he "doesn't want all teachers to carry guns – just those who have a 'natural talent.'" Added the President, "The headline was 'Trump wants all teachers to have guns. Trump wants teachers to have guns.' I don't want teachers to have guns. ... I want highly trained people that have a natural talent, like hitting a baseball or hitting a golf ball or putting."

***Inslee Opposes Arming Teachers, Tells Trump To Engage In "More Listening" And "Less Tweeting."*** The [Seattle Times](#) (2/26, Brunner) reports Gov. Jay Inslee "engaged in a televised clash Monday with...Trump over the idea of arming some schoolteachers, telling the president to try 'less tweeting' and 'more listening.'" Said Inslee, "I just suggest we need a little less tweeting here and a little more listening. And let's just take that off the table and move forward." Inslee "has been mentioned as a potential 2020 presidential candidate, though he has downplayed the speculation."

[The Hill](#) (2/26, Fabian) refers to a "surprising confrontation" between Inslee and Trump, and the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/26, Westwood) reports Trump "responded by noting that some states already allow properly licensed teachers to bring guns into their classrooms." Said Trump, "You know, we have a number of states right now that do that."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/26, lead story, 3:50, Muir) reported "the President immediately turned to Republican Greg Abbott, governor of Texas, one of a handful of states that allows qualified teachers to carry concealed weapons." [Reuters](#) (2/26, Rampton) notes that Abbott "said more than 100 school districts in his state have trained teachers and other staff to carry a weapon and respond to attacks." Said Abbott, "Some school districts, they promote it. ... They will have signs out front, a warning sign, 'Be aware there are armed personnel on campus.'"

Inslee was asked on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/26) whether the President was moving away from raising the age to buy an AR-15 or long rifle to 21 from 18. Inslee said, "This is a pattern. This is a pattern of sort of saying things and then backing away from them and then going the opposite direction. It's the art of the con. We've seen it many times from this president and it is most unfortunate. The proposal to raise to 21 is just common sense. Look, to say that you can go buy on your 18th birthday, blow out the candles and then go get a semiautomatic weapon and then put a bump stock on it and be fully automatic is just nuts."

According to the [Washington Times](#) (2/26, Boyer), the "mini-lecture that Mr. Trump received Monday from...Inslee at the White House was typical of the broad pushback against his idea of putting more guns in the hands of trained adults in schools." Gov. Rick Scott of Florida, "whose state was the scene of the high school massacre on Feb. 14 that left 17 dead, also rejects the idea of arming more school personnel."

***Ivanka Trump "Stops Short" Of Endorsing Idea Of Arming Teachers.*** In an interview with Ivanka Trump on [NBC's Today](#) (2/26), Peter Alexander reported she "says school safety should be a top priority, but stops short of supporting her father's controversial session that some teachers should carry guns. Do you think arming teachers would make children safer?" Ivanka Trump: "To be honest, I don't know. I think having a teacher who is armed who cares deeply about her students or his students, and is capable and qualified to bear arms is not a bad idea. But it's an idea that needs to be discussed."

***Trump Says Discussion Must Include Role For "Mental Institutions."*** [Bloomberg News](#) (2/26, Jacobs) reports Trump also "suggested the country also should make it easier to involuntarily

commit people to psychiatric institutions.” Referring to the Florida shooter, Trump said, “In the old days you’d put him in a mental institution. ... We’re going to have to start talking about mental institutions.” The [New York Times](#) (2/26, Sullivan) noted that Trump added that “there was a time when it was easier to have people who acted like a “boiler ready to explode” committed.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/26, Bender) runs a similar story under the headline “Trump Sees Role For Mental Institutions In Stopping Mass Shootings,” in which it notes that the President supported giving law enforcement “immediate access” to take weapons away from the mentally ill.

**Addition Of Mental Records Boosted National Instant Background Check System.** The [Washington Times](#) (2/26, Sherfinski) reports that “in its first nine years of operation, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System flagged just 3,200 gun purchases, or just a couple dozen a month.” However, “then came the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, and a push to get states to add more mental health records to the system. The number soared from a few hundred thousand to nearly 4.7 million by the end of 2016.” The Times adds that “in the nine years after the law was signed, more than 26,000 gun purchases were stopped on mental health grounds. By 2017, the rate was more than 500 denials a month, accounting for about 6 percent of all refused sales.”

**Politico Analysis: Schumer Signals “Hard Line” In Gun Debate.** [Politico](#) (2/26, Everett) reports Senate Minority Leader Schumer “is taking a hard line against any Republican attempt to pass a modest gun measure and then simply move on to other matters.” Schumer “said on Monday afternoon that after the latest mass school shooting in Florida, Congress must at least enact a universal background check proposal that has failed to clear the Senate twice in the past five years.” He warned that “Democrats would not accept merely passing a narrow bill aimed at improving records and information-sharing in the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System without at least attempting to do more.”

**Manchin: Reviving Background Checks Measure Would Require Trump’s Backing.** [Politico](#) (2/26, Lima) reports Sen. Joe Manchin “said Monday the fate of a bipartisan bill to expand background checks on gun sales that repeatedly failed to pass through the Senate is now in the hands of President Donald Trump.” Manchin “expressed an openness to revive the proposal, which would expand firearm background checks to include online sales and gun shows, but said the proposal would need backing from the White House to gain traction in Congress.” Said Manchin, “We’re not going to bring it back unless the President signs on.” Manchin indicated “he had discussed the proposal over the past week with Sen. Pat Toomey, whom he co-sponsored the measure with in 2013, and that they hoped to take it up with the president this week.”

**New Assault Weapons Ban Backed By 156 House Democrats.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/26, Weigel) reports “a supermajority of House Democrats – 156 members of the 193-member conference – have signed on to a new bill that would restore and build on the expired ban on ‘assault weapons.’” The Times adds that “there’s no evidence that the Republican-controlled House would bring the bill to a vote, but the list of sponsors offers hints about whether the party’s politics are moving.”

Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL), asked on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#) (2/26) about his call for a temporary ban on AR-15 purchases, said, “I’m not a proponent for going into anybody’s home and confiscating things out of people’s homes. We’re not Russia under Stalin or China under Mao or Cuba under Castro. That’s not what we are talking about here. We’re talking about future sales here. But I tell them I’m almost a life long NRA member,” but “we have to look at keeping our community safe and protecting our children and protecting our schools. ... There’s common ground here and the President agrees as well.” Mast said on [CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/26), “I want to say to the President take your plan for having a ban on people coming into our country from various, what we would consider terror-related countries. Take that travel ban. Let’s apply the same model to this situation. Let’s assess who is purchasing these firearms and what are the systems that are in place to make sure that the next Omar Mateen or Nikolas Cruz or the next Stephen Paddock isn’t purchasing a firearm.”

**Poll: 61% Back Banning AR-15, 57% Say Mental Health Issues Key To Spate Of Shootings.** [The Hill](#) (2/26, Easley) reports that “according to the latest Harvard CAPS-Harris survey, 61 percent say that the AR-15 should be banned from purchase, compared to 39 percent who say that adults who pass background checks should be able to purchase them.” The survey also “found that 57 percent of voters believe that school shootings are driven by a lack of attention to mental health issues, rather than a lack of gun control.”

**Georgia Senate Drops Plans For Delta Tax Break After Airline Drops NRA Ties.** The [Atlanta](#)

[Journal-Constitution](#) (2/26, Bluestein) reports "the Georgia Senate blocked a lucrative tax break bill on Monday that would benefit Delta Air Lines after the Atlanta-based company severed ties with the National Rifle Association." Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle "said he would not support tax legislation that helped the airline 'unless the company changes its position and fully reinstates its relationship with the NRA.'" [USA Today](#) (2/26, Jansen) notes that state Sen. Rick Jaffares "said that the break was worth \$40 million but that he would lead the charge against it 'to let Delta know their attack on the NRA and our 2nd Amendment is unacceptable.'" The [Washington Times](#) (2/26, Morton), [Breitbart](#) (2/26, Boyle) and [Reuters](#) (2/26, Wise), among other news outlets, also report the story.

***Gunmakers Have Seen Drop In Share Prices Under Trump Administration.*** The [Washington Post](#) (2/26, Siegel) reports that while President Trump's election victory "seemed as if it would bring a boon to gunmakers," more than a year into his Administration, "the stock performances of gun manufacturers tell a surprising story: Among the nation's top companies, three – American Outdoor Brands, Vista Outdoor and Sturm, Ruger & Co. – have seen a large drop in the value of their share prices since the day after Trump's election in November 2016." During the Obama Administration, there were concerns among gun enthusiasts that "the federal government was going to ramp up gun control." As a result, guns sales "sharply climbed" and "so did company profits and share prices." According to experts, Trump's victory "erased much of that anxiety."

***MSNBC Guest: Trump Criticism Of FBI Over Florida Shooting An Impeachable Offense.*** The [Daily Caller](#) (2/26, Athey) reports that MSNBC guest and Sirius XM radio host Mark Thompson said Monday on MSNBC "that he believes criticizing the FBI and law enforcement is a 'high crime and misdemeanor.'" Said Thompson, "And the other thing, just to draw together, this whole thing with the NRA. The NRA and Trump are attacking local law enforcement. The White House is attacking the FBI. ... We've never seen anything like this coming from Republicans. ... And as I've said on your show before, to me that's seditious, which in and of itself is a high crime and misdemeanor. ... If I were Mueller, I would go and pick him up today." [Breitbart](#) (2/26, Key) also reported the story.

### **First Lady "Heartened" By Student Activism In Wake Of Florida Shooting.**

The [Washington Post](#) (2/26, Heil) reports First Lady Melania Trump "tacitly lent support to the young people who have emerged as activists for gun control legislation following the shooting last week at a Florida high school that left 17 people dead." Ahead of "a White House luncheon she hosted for the spouses of the nation's governors," Mrs. Trump said, "I have been heartened to see children across this country using their voices to speak out and try to create change. ... They are our future and they deserve a voice." The [New York Times](#) (2/26, Rogers) notes that White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders "said in a briefing on Monday that the president also supported the student protesters." Said Sanders, "That's the reason why he had a number of them here at the White House just last week."

### **Deputy Peterson Contradicts Sheriff, Defends Performance.**

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/26, Ovalle, Smiley) reports in a statement released by his lawyer Joseph DiRuzzo, "Broward Deputy Scot Peterson says he is no coward." Peterson said he "heard gunshots but believed those gunshots were originating from outside of the buildings on the school campus." The [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (2/26, Fleshler) notes DiRuzzo called accounts of his client's behavior a "gross oversimplification," saying, "Let there be no mistake, Mr. Peterson wishes that he could have prevented the untimely passing of the seventeen victims on that day, and his heart goes out to the families of the victims in their time of need. ... However, the allegations that Mr. Peterson was a coward and that his performance, under the circumstances, failed to meet the standards of police officers are patently untrue."

The [Palm Beach \(FL\) Post](#) (2/26) reports that the statement indicated that "BSO trains its officers that in the event of outdoor gunfire, one is to seek cover and assess the situation in order to communicate what one observes with other law enforcement." The Post adds "that's a contradiction of comments made by [Broward County Sheriff Scott] Israel on Friday when he said that deputies are instructed to immediately engage active shooters, even if backup help is not available."

The [New York Times](#) (2/26, Mazzei) also says the statement "appeared to contradict the sheriff," and the [Washington Post](#) (2/26, Berman) that "Peterson's account on Monday adds to the uncertainty that has swirled around the law enforcement response to the deadly rampage." The [New York Post](#) (2/26, O'Neill), [USA Today](#) (2/26, Bacon), [Daily Caller](#) (2/26, Athey) and the [AP](#) (2/26, Kennedy, Farrington, Anderson), among other news outlets, run similar stories on

Peterson's account.

Manuel Bojorquez of the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/26, lead story, 2:30, Glor) reported "the sheriff's office said it was also investigating unconfirmed reports that three other deputies stayed outside, and whether two of 16 calls about suspect Nikolas Cruz's behavior before the shooting were properly handled."

**Florida House Committee Launches Investigation Of "Local Agencies."** The [Miami Herald](#) (2/26, Bousquet) reports that "at the direction of Speaker Richard Corcoran, a Florida House committee on Monday approved an investigation of 'local agency actions' related to the mass shooting in Parkland." The House Public Integrity & Ethics Committee "plans to issue subpoenas as soon as Wednesday." The Herald adds "every Republican on the committee has already signed a letter calling on Gov. Rick Scott to suspend...Israel from office for an alleged 'neglect of duty' in the case."

In an editorial, the [Tampa \(FL\) Tribune](#) (2/26) says "Scott's order of a state investigation into the performance of the Broward County Sheriff's Office is appropriate, although the call by Florida House Republicans for the governor to suspend the sheriff smacks of political grandstanding." To the Tribune, "government and law enforcement agencies that failed to act in the face of substantial warning signs about Cruz should be held accountable," but "so should lawmakers who fail to protect students and teachers from semi-automatic assault rifles."

**Breitbart: Obama-Backed Policy May Have Allowed Cruz To Remain Under Radar.** [Breitbart](#) (2/26, Berry) reports that the adoption by the Broward County, Florida school district of "a school discipline policy that was praised by the Obama administration for seeking to reduce the reported number of school suspensions, expulsions, and arrests may have played a role in the fact that Nikolas Cruz remained under the radar until his shooting rampage in Parkland, Florida, on February 14." Manhattan Institute senior fellow Max Eden said, "It's not actually accurate to say that what Broward County did was the result of the Obama policy. It might be more accurate to say that what Broward County did was in some way the inspiration for Obama's policy." The Education and Justice Departments under Obama "issued school guidelines in 2014 that claimed students of color are 'disproportionately impacted' by suspensions and expulsions, a situation they said leads to a 'school-to-prison pipeline' that discriminates against minority and low-income students."

### **Justices Decline Trump Request To Bypass Lower Court And Rule On DACA Now.**

Media reports are casting yesterday's Supreme Court decision to rule now on the DACA controversy as a setback for the Administration. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/26, Savage), which terms the decision "a significant defeat" for the President, explains that DOJ "had sought to leapfrog the US appeals courts in California and New York," urging "an 'immediate review' of a nationwide order by US District Judge William Alsup in San Francisco that required the government to maintain" DACA "for now." The Times adds that "the action the administration sought was rare," as "it has been nearly 30 years since the Supreme Court" has granted a similar motion. The [Washington Post](#) (2/26, Barnes) similarly indicates "it would have been exceedingly rare for the Supreme Court to take up" the case now, and the [AP](#) (2/26, Gresko) says the court's decision "wasn't surprising," though "DACA supporters hailed the decision as a significant – if only temporary – win."

In a brief report, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/26, story 5, 0:20, Muir) reported "the decision means the government must continue renewing permits for now, allowing 700,000 Dreamers to stay in the country." [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/26, story 7, 0:25, Holt), meanwhile, said "the court battle is far from over."

[USA Today](#) (2/26, Wolf, Gomez) notes the court stated, "It is assumed that the Court of Appeals will proceed expeditiously to decide this case." [Politico](#) (2/26, Gerstein, Hesson) reports the court acted unanimously. The [Daily Caller](#) (2/26, Daley) also describes the federal government's request "an extraordinary procedural move" which justices "rarely grant," and [Breitbart](#) (2/26, Klukowski) says "the justices will adhere to the standard practice of waiting for a full-length written opinion from the Ninth Circuit and using it as part of the foundation of the High Court's analysis." The [New York Times](#) (2/26, Liptak, Shear), meanwhile, points out that the court's move "will temporarily shield the young immigrants who already had signed up for the DACA program from immediate deportation, and allow them to keep working legally in the United States." [The Hill](#) (2/26, Wheeler, Bernal), [Roll Call](#) (2/26, Ruger) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/26, Kendall), among other news outlets, run similar reports this morning.

The [Washington Times](#) (2/26, Miller) reports Trump "lamented the Supreme Court decision not to fast-track" its decision, saying, "Nothing is as bad as the 9th Circuit. ... It is really sad

when every single case filed against us is in the 9th Circuit. We lose, we lose, we lose and then we do fine in the Supreme Court." Another [Washington Times](#) (2/26, Dinan) piece reiterates that Trump's "disappointment aside, it would have been extraordinary for the high court to take the case on such a fast track, and the Justice Department said it recognized it was asking a lot – though it said it was warranted in this case." Said DOJ spokesman Devin O'Malley, "We will continue to defend DHS' lawful authority to wind down DACA in an orderly manner."

[Reuters](#) (2/26, Hurley, Chung) reports White House spokesman Raj Shah said, "The DACA program – which provides work permits and myriad government benefits to illegal immigrants en masse – is clearly unlawful. The district judge's decision to unilaterally re-impose a program that Congress had explicitly and repeatedly rejected is a usurpation of legislative authority. ... We look forward to having this case expeditiously heard by the appeals court and, if necessary, the Supreme Court, where we fully expect to prevail."

To [Breitbart](#) (2/26, Munro), "the lower courts' intervention – and SCOTUS' neutrality – skews political horsetrading in Washington DC in favor of Democrats," who now oppose "a political trade on DACA offered by...Trump, in part, because they do not think the 680,000 illegals will lose their work permits if they refuse a deal." The "court-enabled political standoff is likely to push immigration policy deeper into the 2018 election."

***Politico Analysis: Ruling Means Lawmakers No Longer Face Tight Deadline To Approve DACA.*** [Politico](#) (2/26, Schor, Caygle) reports, "The already-dwindling political urgency for Congress to reach an immigration deal all but collapsed on Monday when the Supreme Court took a pass on the issue." After the ruling, "there's little bite left in the March 5 deadline Trump gave to lawmakers," and "in a Congress that was already at a stalemate over how to balance relief for DACA recipients with tougher border security, the ruling appeared to further dampen prospects for a legislative compromise – and leave the fate of Dreamers to the courts for months to come."

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/26) urges Republicans to continue working toward a solution to the immigration standoff, and not to take the court ruling as an excuse to put off resolving the impasse.

***Newark Archbishop Urges Congress To Legalize Dreamers.*** Joseph W. Tobin, Catholic archbishop of Newark, writes in the [New York Times](#) (2/26) that "the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls on us to welcome and protect the stranger. This should not be hard to do when the stranger is young, blameless and working hard to make this country a better place." Tobin goes on to call "helping Dreamer youth to become American citizens...a clear moral test that our nation must not fail."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

***"We All Must Live With Mitch McConnell's Proudest Moment."*** A [New York Times](#) (2/26) editorial highlights Senate Majority Leader McConnell's refusal to consider a nominee to replace late Justice Antonin Scalia from former President Obama to allow Americans to "have a voice in the selection" through the presidential election. Citing the union fees case heard by the Court Monday, the Times argues that the "enormously consequential swap is already having concrete effects on American society." Justice Neil Gorsuch is unlikely to "vote with the unions," and had Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, filled the seat, "it's unlikely the case would have been brought at all."

### Washington Post.

***"A New Form Of Totalitarianism Takes Root In China."*** A [Washington Post](#) (2/26) editorial says that while Xi Jinping became China's president five years ago, "there was reason for hope that Communist Party rule was gradually moving toward pluralism and the rule of law." Under Xi, however, the Post says "freedom for everyday Chinese has shrunk dramatically," and now the Communist Party is seeking to remove presidential term limits to allow Xi to remain in power. Asked about China on Friday, President Trump "boasted about what he called a 'quite extraordinary' personal relationship" with Xi, but "had nothing to say about Mr. Xi's ruthless consolidation of power. The many people around the world who understand and fear the challenge this represents will have to find ways to defend liberal democracy without assistance from the White House."

***"The Nunes Memo Continues To Backfire."*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/26) says, "The Republicans' central charge, embodied in the Nunes memo, was this: Federal investigators



failed to fully inform judges that information in a secret surveillance warrant application against...Page came from a biased source, a dossier containing wide-ranging allegations against Mr. Trump and his circle that former British spy Christopher Steele compiled on behalf of Democrats. ... The Democrats' response memo reveals that judges were, in fact, told that the dossier came from a source the FBI considered politically biased." The Post adds, "The trumped-up charges and cherry-picked evidence of the Nunes memo discredit the House majority. "

**"Scalia Embraced Compromise On Unions. Today's Supreme Court Should, Too."** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/26) recommends a compromise solution in the case Janus v. AFSCME. The solution was endorsed by the late Justice Antonin Scalia and the Post argues that for Justice Neil Gorsuch and the full court, "this is a rare opportunity simultaneously to embrace the doctrine of modern conservatism's judicial hero while steering the court modestly down the middle of the road. They should take it."

### **Wall Street Journal.**

**"Microsoft's Legal Cloud Cover."** In an editorial on the case Microsoft v. U.S., which concerns whether records stored on the cloud are covered by warrants issued under the 1986 Stored Communications Act, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/26) disagrees with the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit's ruling that the information, which is stored in Ireland, is beyond the warrant's reach and calls on the Supreme Court, which is hearing the case Tuesday, to overturn it.

**"The Dreamers Deferred."** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/26) urges Republicans to continue working toward a solution to the immigration standoff, and not to take the court ruling as an excuse to put off resolving the impasse.

**"California's Democratic Tea Party."** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/26) argues that the fact the California Democratic Party refused to endorse Sen. Dianne Feinstein in her 2018 bid for reelection is the latest sign that the party is continuing to shift leftward in response to President Trump, with activists seeking to get rid of lawmakers think aren't partisan or are insufficiently liberal. The Journal says Feinstein is facing a challenge from her left by state Senate President Kevin de León, who is pushing a raft of liberal proposals.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today's Front Pages.**

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[High Court Deals Setback To Trump Immigration Policy](#)  
[Fidelity Rethinks Its Stock-Picker System After Complaints](#)  
[How Softbank, World's Biggest Tech Investor, Throws Around Its Cash](#)  
[Blessed By Xi Jinping: The New Captain Of China's Economy](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[President Says He'd Storm In To Stop A Killer](#)  
[Justices Refuse White House Bid In 'Dreamer' Case](#)  
[China Leaps To Front Of A New Authoritarian Era](#)  
[Europeans Move To Save Iran Deal](#)  
[Partisanship From The Pulpit Splits Evangelicals](#)  
[Civil Rights Act Offers Shield For Gay Workers, Court Rules](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[Justices Decline To Hear Case On DACA](#)  
[On The Brink Of Extinction](#)  
[Panama To Probe Bizarre Standoff At Trump Hotel](#)  
[Democrats' Attack Shifts As US Paychecks Grow](#)  
[Trump Backs No Specific Gun Bill](#)  
[Sheriff Faces Scrutiny Over Response To Fla. Shooting](#)

#### **Financial Times:**

[Qualcomm Open To Broadcom Bid But Seeks \\$160bn Price Tag](#)  
[Women Dominate Italy's Army Of Undecided Voters](#)

## [China Moves To Silence Outcry Over Abolition Of Xi's Term Limit](#)

### ***Washington Times:***

[Mental Health Checks Halting Gun Sales](#)

[DACA Still Active After Quick Appeal Denied](#)

[Push To Arm Teachers Met With Resistance](#)

### ***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting-WH; Florida School Shooting; Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; DACA-Legal Ruling; House Intelligence Committee Memo; Syria Civil War; Niger Ambush Investigation; Ivanka Trump Interview; Southwest Emergency Landing; Facebook Live Murder; Library Stabbing; CDC Employee Missing; Bill Cosby's Daughter Dies; High School Hockey.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Florida School Shooting-WH; Severe Weather; CDC Employee Missing; Teen Depression; Syria Civil War; Niger Ambush Investigation; WV Teachers Strike; Monica Lewinsky; CBS Cameraman Dies; High School Hockey.

**NBC:** Florida School Shooting-WH; Florida School Shooting; Severe Weather; Facebook Live Murder; Syria Civil War; US-North Korea Relations; DACA-Legal Ruling; Teen Depression; SF Fire Fighters-Cancer; Citi Credit Card Refund; Houston Apartment Fire; Washington State Avalanche Sighting; Snowy Scene; University Basketball.

### ***Network TV At A Glance:***

Florida School Shooting – 15 minutes, 40 seconds

Severe Weather – 5 minutes, 20 seconds

Syria Civil War – 3 minutes, 35 seconds

### ***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Florida School Shooting; Rhode Island-Gun Control; DACA-Legal Ruling; Michigan-Sexual Abuse Laws; Wall Street News.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting; Severe Weather; Michigan-Sexual Abuse Laws; Billy Graham Funeral.

**FOX:** Florida School Shooting; Rhode Island-Gun Control; Missouri Governor Indicted.

**NPR:** DACA-Legal Ruling; Trump Property-Foreign Payments; Florida School Shooting.

## **Washington Schedule**

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### **Today's Events In Washington.**

#### **White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Republican members of the Senate on renewable fuel standards; receives the Boy Scouts of America Report to the Nation; meets with Republican members of the House of Representatives about trade; makes an announcement regarding additional leadership in the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Delivers remarks to the Susan B. Anthony List & Life Issues Institute and the National Religious Broadcasters' Proclaim 18 Convention; participates in a closed-press Republican Governors Association event with Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam.

**US Senate:** 9:30 AM Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on USCYBERCOM – Hearing on 'United States Cyber Command', with testimony from U.S. Cyber Command Commander / National Security Agency Director / Central Security Services Chief Adm. Michael Rogers  
Location: Hart Senate Office Building, Rm 216, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate HELP Committee hearing on the opioid crisis – Hearing on 'The Opioid Crisis: The Role of Technology and Data in Preventing and Treating Addiction', with testimony from Express Scripts Vice President for Clinical Product Development Snezana Mahon; National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws co-founder Sherry Green; Santa Clara University Public Health Program Dean's Executive Professor H. Westley Clark; and University of Illinois at Chicago Clinical Assistant Professor of Health Informatics Sanket Shah  
Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:30 AM Bipartisan Sens. Graham and Coons 'Pen and Pad' session on recent CODEL to Israel, Jordan, Greece, and the UK – Bipartisan Sens. Lindsey Graham and Chris Coons hold 'Pen and Pad' session to discuss their recent bipartisan Senate delegation travel to Israel, Jordan, Greece, and the UK  
Location: U.S. Capitol, Senate Press Gallery, Washington, DC



lgraham.senate.gov <https://twitter.com/LindseyGrahamSC>

11:00 AM Bicameral Dems press conference on Net Neutrality National Day of Action – Democrats Sens. Ed Markey and Richard Blumenthal and Rep. Mike Doyle press conference on Net Neutrality National Day of Action, discussing momentum for Sen. Markey's Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval. The lawmakers are joined by representatives from ACLU, Center for Digital Technology, Center for Media Justice, Color of Change, Consumers Union, Demand Progress, Engine, Fight for the Future, Free Press, National Hispanic Media Coalition, Open Technology Institute and Public Knowledge Location: U.S. Capitol, Senate Swamp, Washington, DC [www.markey.senate.gov](http://www.markey.senate.gov) <https://twitter.com/SenMarkey>

2:00 PM House / Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets group – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on 'Legislative Presentation of the Disabled American Veterans', with testimony from DAV National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster, National Service Director Jim Marszalek, National Legislative Director Joy Ilem, Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine, National Adjutant J. Marc Burgess, National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski, National Director of Voluntary Service John Kleindienst, National Director of Employment Jeffrey Hall, and DAV Auxiliary National Commander William Johniken Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

2:30 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

2:30 PM Senate Foreign Relations Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Kevin Edward Moley to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs; Josephine Olsen to be Peace Corps Director; Erik Bethel to be International Bank for Reconstruction and Development U.S. Alternate Executive Director; and Sean Cairncross to be Millennium Challenge Corporation CEO Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 419, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

2:30 PM POSTPONED: Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on new technologies and emerging threats – POSTPONED: Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee hearing on 'Accelerating New Technologies to Meet Emerging Threats', with testimony from Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering Michael Griffin, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy Eric Chewning; Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency Director Dr Steven Walker; and Defense Innovation Unit Experimental Acting Managing Director Capt. Sean Heritage Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 232A, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 9:00 AM POSTPONED: Hearing on 'The FY 2019 Foreign Affairs Budget', with testimony from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2172, Washington, DC <http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACrepublicans>

9:30 AM GOP Sen. Tim Scott and Rep. Mark Walker host HBCU Fly-in – Republicans Sen. Tim Scott and Rep. Mark Walker host HBCU Fly-in: 'Advancing Opportunity and Entrepreneurship', to provide HBCU leaders, job creators, and policymakers with the opportunity to discuss avenues for promoting educational achievement, bolstering cross-sector partnerships, and meeting the ever-shifting demands of the American workforce. Agenda includes press availability with Sen. Scott and Rep. Walker (12:00 PM EST) and Member Panel with Sen. Scott, Rep. Walker, Republican Sen. James Lankford and Democratic Rep. Terri Sewell (1:45 PM EST). Other participants include Republican Rep. Bradley Byrne, Walmart Vice President of Programs Julie Gehrki, John Deere Vice President of U.S. Policy and Strategy Collis Jones, Bank of America Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Cynthia Bowman, Starbucks Corporate Counsel Kris Clemmons, Baltimore Ravens tight end Benjamin Watson, United Negro College Fund President and CEO Michael Lomax and Thurgood Marshall College Fund President and CEO Harry Williams Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1309, Washington, DC [www.scott.senate.gov](http://www.scott.senate.gov) <https://twitter.com/SenatorTimScott>

10:00 AM POSTPONED: Capital Markets, Securities, and Investment Subcommittee hearing on 'Oversight of the SEC's Division of Enforcement' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

10:00 AM House Homeland Security subcommittee hearing on TSA outreach and traveler engagement efforts – Transportation and Protective Security Subcommittee hearing on 'The Public Face of TSA: Examining the Agency's Outreach and Traveler Engagement Efforts', with testimony from Transportation Security Administration Acting Assistant Administrator for Civil Rights and Liberties, Ombudsman and Traveler Engagement Christine Griggs, and Deputy Assistant Administrator for Security Operations Stacey Fitzmaurice; and National Center for

Transgender Equality Director of Policy Harper Jean Tobin Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-210, Washington, DC [homeland.house.gov https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland](https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland)

10:00 AM Interior Secretary Zinke testifies to House Natural Resources subcommittee legislative hearing – Water, Power and Oceans Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'H.R. 2947, Strengthening Coastal Communities Act of 2017' and 'H.R. 4880, To revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chaffee Coastal Barrier Resources System Units in Delaware', with testimony from Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke; Bay County, FL, Commissioner Philip Griffiths; and National Audubon Society Vice President for Coastal Conservation Karen Hyun Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

10:00 AM House Science subcommittee hearing on sexual harassment and misconduct in the field – Research and Technology Subcommittee hearing on 'A Review of Sexual Harassment and Misconduct in Science', with testimony from National Science Foundation Office of Diversity and Inclusion head Rhonda Davis; University of Illinois Department of Anthropology associate professor Dr Kathryn Clancy; American Geophysical Union executive director Christine McEntee; and attorney Kristina Larsen Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2318, Washington, DC <https://science.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HouseScience>

10:00 AM House Small Business subcommittee hearing on 'excessive licensing' – Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access Subcommittee hearing on 'Occupational Hazards: How Excessive Licensing Hurts Small Business', with testimony from R Street Institute Senior Fellow C. Jarrett Dieterle; National Association for the Self-Employed President and CEO Keith Hall; Zona Salons owner Frank Zona (on behalf of Professional Beauty Association); and University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs Professor Dr Morris Kleiner Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

10:00 AM Energy Subcommittee hearing on 'State of the Nation's Energy Infrastructure' Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM House Workforce subcommittee hearing on the OSHA – Workforce Protections Subcommittee hearing on 'A More Effective and Collaborative OSHA: A View from Stakeholders', with testimony from Tree Care Industry Association Senior Advisor for Safety, Standards and Compliance Peter Gerstenberger; J. Gary Hill President J. Gary Hill (on behalf of National Association of Home Builders); Ogletree Deakins shareholder Eric Hobbs (on behalf of U.S. Chamber of Commerce); and George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health Professor Dr David Michaels Location: Rm 2175, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://edworkforce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/EdWorkforce>

10:00 AM Fed Chair Powell presents Monetary Policy Report to House Financial Services Committee – House Committee on Financial Services hearing on 'Monetary Policy and the State of the Economy', with testimony from Federal Reserve Board Chair Jerome Powell (presenting the semi-annual Monetary Policy Report) Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://www.federalreserve.gov> <https://twitter.com/federalreserve>

10:00 AM House Budget Committee continues series of hearings on oversight of the CBO – Hearing on 'CBO Oversight: The Role of Behavioral Modeling in Scoring and Baseline Construction', with testimony from Congressional Budget Office Director Keith Hall, Deputy Assistant Director for Health, Retirement, and Long-Term Analysis Jessica Banthin, and Associate Director for Economic Analysis Jeffrey Kling \* Continues a series of five hearings on the CBO Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1334, Washington, DC <http://budget.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/housebudgetgop>

10:00 AM House Armed Services Committee hearing on defense challenges in the Middle East – Hearing on 'Terrorism and Iran: Defense Challenges in the Middle East', with testimony from U.S. Central Command Commander Gen. Joseph Votel Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

10:00 AM House Transportation subcommittee hearing on aviation safety – Aviation Subcommittee hearing on 'The State of Aviation Safety', with testimony from Federal Aviation Administration Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety Ali Bahrami; NASA Deputy Director of Airspace Operations and Safety Programs Akbar Sultan; National Transportation Safety Board Office of Aviation Safety Director John DeLisi; Department of Transportation Assistant Inspector General for Aviation Audits Matthew Hampton; and Airline Pilots Association International President Tim Canoll Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2167, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM Govs. Herbert; Martinez; and Otter testify to House Oversight Committee –

Hearing on 'Federalism Implications of Treating States as Stakeholders', with testimony from Utah Governor Gary Herbert; New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez; and Idaho Governor Butch Otter Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2154, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:00 AM House Agriculture Committee marks up its views and estimates letter – Business Meeting, to consider 'The Budget Views and Estimates Letter of the Committee on Agriculture for the agencies and programs under the jurisdiction of the Committee for fiscal year 2019' Location: Rm 1300, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://agriculture.house.gov/>

11:00 AM House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer regular pen-and-pad briefing Location: H-144, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC [www.democraticwhip.gov/](http://www.democraticwhip.gov/) <https://twitter.com/WhipHoyer>

11:00 AM House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on Survivors' Bill of Rights Act implementation – Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on 'Implementation of the Survivors' Bill of Rights Act', with testimony from RISE CEO and founder Amanda Nguyen, and Chief of Staff (and survivor) Lauren Libby; artist, advocate, and survivor Evan Wood; and Rape Abuse Incest National Network Vice President Rebecca O'Connor Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2141, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseJudiciary>

11:30 AM Day of Action for Black Immigrants in Washington, DC – Day of Action in Washington, DC, for black undocumented immigrant communities, including a Congressional briefing sponsored by Democratic Rep. Yvette Clarke (11:30 AM EST). Participants include the UndocuBlack Network, Women's March Co-President and civil rights activist Tamika Mallory; National Coalition on Black Civic Participation President and CEO of Black Women's Roundtable Convener, Melanie Campbell, National Action Network Northeast Regional Director Minister Kirsten John Foy, Empowerment Temple's Jamal Bryant, The People's Consortium Head Stephen Green, and artist and Justice League NYC member Mysonne Linen Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2044, Washington, DC <http://undocublack.org> <https://twitter.com/UndocuBlack> #ForBlackImmigrants

12:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including 'H.R. 4296 – To place requirements on operational risk capital requirements for banking organizations established by an appropriate Federal banking agency' and 'H.R. 1865 – Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017', plus consideration of 'H.R. 5078 – TRID Improvement Act of 2018', as amended, under suspension of the rules Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

1:15 PM Markup hearing on 'Adoption of Ways and Means Committee Views and Estimates on the Fiscal Year 2019 Federal Budget' Location: Rm 1100, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/WaysandMeansGOP>

2:00 PM House Homeland Security subcommittee hearing on improving DHS contractor employee vetting – Oversight and Management Efficiency Subcommittee hearing on 'Doing Business with DHS: Industry Recommendations to Improve Contractor Employee Vetting', with testimony from Intelligence and National Security Alliance Senior Intelligence Advisor Charles Allen; Homeland Security & Defense Business Council President and CEO Marc Pearl; Professional Services Council President and CEO David Berteau; and ArdentMC President and CEO Brandon LaBonte Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-210, Washington, DC [homeland.house.gov](http://homeland.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland>

2:00 PM Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission briefing on El Salvador – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission briefing on 'Promoting Accountability in El Salvador: The Case of El Mozote', with a panel of Due Process of Law Foundation attorney Leonor Arteaga, El Mozote Association for the Defense of Human Rights Dorila Marquez, civil attorney David Morales, and National Security Archive Senior Analyst Kate Doyle discussing the history of the El Mozote massacre during El Salvador's civil war, its impact, the challenges involved in the legal case brought against 18 retired military officers, and recommendations for ways the U.S. Govt can contribute to justice for the victims and their families Location: Cannon House Office Building, Rm 340, Washington, DC <http://tlhrc.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/TLHRCommission>

2:00 PM House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on women's role in countering terrorism – Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee hearing on 'Women's Role in Countering Terrorism', with testimony from Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service Professor Dr Valerie Hudson; Quilliam International CEO Haras Rafiq; George W. Bush Institute Women's Initiative Manager Farhat Popal; and Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow for Women and Foreign Policy Jamille Bigio Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2172, Washington, DC <http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACrepublicans>

2:00 PM House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on proposed CVS Health / Aetna merger – Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law Subcommittee hearing on 'Competition in the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain: The Proposed Merger of CVS Health and Aetna', with testimony from CVS Health Executive Vice President, Chief Policy and External Affairs Officer, and General Counsel Thomas Moriarty; Aetna Executive Vice President and General Counsel Thomas Sabatino Jr.; Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management Health Enterprise Management Program Director Dr Craig Garthwaite; NERA Economic Consulting President Dr Lawrence Wu; Consumer Union Senior Policy Counsel George Slover; and International Center for Law and Economics Executive Director Geoffrey Manne Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2141, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseJudiciary>

2:00 PM House Small Business Committee hearing on GAO report on 'red tape' and community banks and credit unions – Hearing on 'How Red Tape Affects Community Banks and Credit Unions: A GAO Report', with testimony from Government Accountability Office Director of Financial Markets and Community Investment Michael Clements Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

2:00 PM House / Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets group – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on 'Legislative Presentation of the Disabled American Veterans', with testimony from DAV National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster, National Service Director Jim Marszalek, National Legislative Director Joy Ilem, Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine, National Adjutant J. Marc Burgess, National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski, National Director of Voluntary Service John Kleindienst, National Director of Employment Jeffrey Hall, and DAV Auxiliary National Commander William Johniken Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

2:00 PM House Natural Resources subcommittee oversight hearing on LNG and geopolitics – Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee oversight hearing on 'Liquefied Natural Gas and U.S. Geopolitics', with testimony from Center for European Policy Analysis President and CEO Peter Doran; Tellurian President and CEO Meg Gentle; Atlantic Council Deputy Director for Climate & Advanced Energy David Livingston; and Cheniere Energy Senior Vice President for Policy, Government and Public Affairs Christopher Smith Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

2:00 PM POSTPONED: Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules Subcommittee hearing on 'An Obamacare Failure: The Multi-State Plan Program' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2154, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

2:00 PM POSTPONED: House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act – POSTPONED: Monetary Policy and Trade Subcommittee hearing on 'H.R. 4311, the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act of 2017' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

2:30 PM Bipartisan Reps. Barbara Lee and Justin Amash host ad-hoc hearing on the 2001 AUMF – Democratic Rep. Barbara Lee and Republican Rep. Justin Amash, in conjunction with the Congressional Progressive Caucus and the House Liberty Caucus, host bipartisan ad-hoc hearing on the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), discussing 'the need to repeal the 2001 AUMF and hold a Congressional debate and vote on a new AUMF'. Experts – Defense Priorities Senior Fellow Lt. Col. (Ret.) Daniel Davis, Human Rights First International Legal Counsel Rita Siemion, and Veterans For Peace Executive Director Michael McPhearson – discuss the impact of the 2001 AUMF on global security and discuss potential frameworks for a new military authorization Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2358-C, Washington, DC [lee.house.gov](http://lee.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/RepBarbaraLee>

**Other:** 8:00 AM Democratic Rep. Jan Schakowsky hosts breakfast event Location: Charlie Palmer Steak, 101 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.janschakowsky.org](http://www.janschakowsky.org) <https://twitter.com/RepSchakowsky>

8:30 AM Invest in America! Summit – Annual Invest in America! Summit, brings together global investors and U.S. stakeholders to discuss benefits and challenges of foreign investment in the U.S. and to promote opportunities for partnership. Speakers include Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin, Republican Sens. John Cornyn and Orrin Hatch, Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin, Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant, Kansas Governor Jeff Colyer, Colorado Governor John

Hickenlooper, Maine Governor Paul LePage, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder, and Organization for International Investment President and CEO Nancy McLernon Location: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC [www.uschamber.com](http://www.uschamber.com)  
<https://twitter.com/USChamber>

11:00 AM POSTPONED: Bipartisan Reps. Steve Pearce and Jim Himes speak at USIP on illicit use of cryptocurrencies – POSTPONED: 'Countering the Illicit Use of Cryptocurrency and Other Emerging Technologies' U.S. Institute of Peace discussion, with Republican Rep. Steve Pearce and Democratic Rep. Jim Himes Location: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2301 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org) <https://twitter.com/USIP>

6:00 PM American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Washington Briefing – American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Washington Briefing. Speakers include Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao and President's Special Assistant for Infrastructure Policy D.J. Gribbin Location: Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.transportation.org](http://www.transportation.org) <https://twitter.com/aashtospeaks>

6:00 PM Tracy's Kids annual fundraising gala – Tracy's Kids annual 'And the Winner is...' fundraising gala, with 500 guests walking a red carpet before watching their choice of one of a number of award-winning films. Includes presentation of the Courage Award to House Majority Whip Steve Scalise and Democratic Sen. Mazie Hirono Location: Regal Cinemas Gallery Place 14, 701 7th St NW, Washington, DC [www.tracyskids.org](http://www.tracyskids.org)

6:00 PM Dem Sen. Doug Jones at Library of Congress program on the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing – Library of Congress hosts evening program about the 1963 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham, AL, with Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden joining Democratic Sen. Doug Jones for a special conversation about the event, followed by a screening of the Spike Lee documentary '4 Little Girls' Location: Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building, Washington, DC <http://www.loc.gov/homepage/lchp.html> <https://twitter.com/librarycongress>

AG Sessions addresses National Association of Attorneys General – National Association of Attorneys General Winter Meeting, with 41 state and territorial attorneys general gathering to discuss legal issues including preventing elder abuse, the latest U.S. Supreme Court cases, and prescription drugs. Day two speakers include Attorney General Jeff Sessions Location: The Ritz-Carlton, 1150 22nd St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.naag.org>  
[#NAAGMeeting](https://twitter.com/NatlAssnAttysGn)

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Stephen Colbert:** "Trump met with the nation's governors, and at the top of the agenda was the urgent problem of school shootings. Donald Trump has said that maybe we should arm teachers. This idea has not been received well by people who have been, or who have had, a teacher."

**Stephen Colbert:** "Of course, Trump's saying 'arm the teachers' because if you're in the pocket of the NRA, the solution is never fewer guns. The solution is always more guns."

**Stephen Colbert:** "In the last week, United Airlines, Best Western, MetLife and at least a dozen other companies have canceled discounts and perks for NRA members. ... Although, remember gun owners, if you go into almost any business and show them your gun, they'll give you stuff for free. I didn't even know these gun discounts existed."

**Stephen Colbert:** "Trump values loyalty, which explains why he's considering his personal pilot to lead the FAA. Can no qualified person work in the Trump Administration? 'Okay, head of the FAA, captain pilot guy. Secretary of Transportation, chauffeur fellow. And head of the USDA, obviously, meatloaf.'"

**James Corden:** "In other Trump news, new tax filings show that President Donald Trump's former bodyguard has been receiving \$15,000 a month from the Republican National Committee since leaving the White House. He's getting \$15,000 a month. You realize what this means, right? Guys, Trump was sleeping with his bodyguard too. The bodyguard has a lot of experience in his field. He served in the US Navy and the New York City Police Department. So according to Trump, he has almost enough weapons training to work as a schoolteacher."

**Trevor Noah:** "Xi Jinping President for life! Yeah, makes sense, China gets rid of its One Child Policy and replaces it with the One President Policy. It works out, you know? ... If I were China, I would be like, 'Hey, guys, we totally love democracy, we totally want to be one, but then we saw what democracy did in America, and that was not a fortune cookie we are willing to crack.'"

**Trevor Noah:** "Congress is returning from break, and, like most Americans, they're discussing two things: one, gun control; and two, how awesome 'Black Panther' is."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "The big winner [of the Winter Olympics] this year was Norway. They won a record 39 medals. Wow. Or one for each person who lives in Norway."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "The US men's curling team beat Sweden to win their first gold medal ever! Actually, they were beating Sweden so bad, they conceded the match early. Yep, America made Sweden quit in frustration, or as we call that, the reverse Ikea."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "A bit of a scandal, though. I guess Russian spies hacked hundreds of computers at the Olympics. Which explains why Hillary Clinton didn't win a single gold medal."

**Seth Meyers:** "President Trump said, 'I really believe I'd run in there even if I didn't have a weapon.' I got to say, I find it hard to believe Trump would voluntarily run inside a place of education. The only way he would run inside is if a reporter asked you a question outside."

**Seth Meyers:** "In a new interview, President Trump said that he would like to have a military parade on July 4th or Veterans Day. Added Trump, 'Whichever one comes first.'"

**Conan O'Brien:** "Over the weekend, a lot of major companies announced they will be cutting ties with NRA, including Delta, Hertz, and MetLife. All cutting ties. And here's the one that really shocked me: Today, the NRA got dropped by ISIS. ISIS was like, 'Those guys are crazy.' There goes that discount."

**Jordan Klepper:** "If you don't know, CPAC is like Lollapalooza meets Comic Con at the men's khaki section of an Old Navy. It is nonstop Grand Old Party."

**Jordan Klepper:** "Whoa, thank God security got [Mona Charen] out of [CPAC] because that woman had smuggled in a dangerous weapon: a slightly different opinion."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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## DOI In The News

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### Ryan Zinke Postpones Oil And Gas Lease Sale Near Yellowstone After Local Opposition.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/5, Siegel) reports that amid protests from locals, Interior Secretary Zinke said Monday that "he will delay an oil and gas lease sale planned this month in Montana near Yellowstone National Park." Zinke [tweeted](#), "After talking with residents and local, state and federal officials, we have decided to defer the oil and gas sale around Livingston #Montana." This marks "the second time Zinke in recent days has postponed an oil and gas lease sale after locals expressed opposition to the plans." On Friday, he "postponed an oil and gas lease sale near Chaco Canyon in northern New Mexico until the agency can review the impact on cultural artifacts in the area."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, Grandoni, Eilperin) reports that while Zinke withdrew 26 parcels from consideration, Interior next Monday will proceed "with the auction of the remaining 83 parcels, which encompass nearly 46,200 acres."

Also reporting are the [AP](#) (3/5), [Reuters](#) (3/5, Volcovici), [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (3/5, Nemec), and the [Missoula Current \(MT\)](#) (3/5, Devlin).

### The Next Wildfire Season Starts Soon. The Government Wants To Use Drones To Fight It.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, Grandoni) reports that last year, the Interior Department, "which leads interagency efforts on unmanned aircrafts outside the Pentagon, flew 707 drone missions on 71 wildfires." Currently, "the federal government just uses small drones to surveil fires and aid firefighters on the ground." But the goal is "to deploy retardant-dumping helicopters capable of being flown either manned and unmanned, so firefighting efforts can continue around the clock."

### Interior Wants To Know How To Manage Its Huge Social Media Presence.

[NextGov](#) (3/5, Boyd) reports that the Interior Department, which "has more than 1,500 social media accounts," is seeking "to be able to manage them all through one central portal." Interior "released a notice of sources sought Monday seeking information on tactics for managing social accounts enterprisewide, as well as companies who have experience in this area." Specifically, the department is "looking for a single platform – either a tool or 'suite of tools' – to manage social accounts across platforms."

### Alaska Senator Says Opening Of Arctic Refuge Could Start Next Year.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/5, Siegel) reports Alaska Sen. Dan Sullivan yesterday "said he hopes that the Interior Department could begin opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in 2019, ahead of the timeline expected by Congress." During a CERWeek panel discussion, Sullivan said, "It is my hope, and this is a very aggressive timeline, that we would have the first [oil and natural gas] lease sale to be sometime in 2019." According to Sullivan, officials with the Interior Department are visiting ANWR "this week to scope opportunities for energy exploration." [The Hill](#) (3/5, Cama) reports Sullivan "encouraged oil industry officials there to bid in the lease sales." The [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (3/6, Connelly) also provides coverage.

### Plan To Name Utah Highway After Trump Clears Hurdle.

The [AP](#) (3/5, Whitehurst) reports that "a plan to name a Utah highway after President Donald Trump to recognize his contentious decision to shrink two sprawling national monuments got a nod of approval from a panel of state lawmakers on Monday." The proposal, backed by Rep. Mike Noel, "would rename National Parks Highway, which overlaps several roads connecting well-known parks like Zion, Arches and Bryce." Noel said, "President Trump cares about the public lands. President Trump's family cares about the public lands and he cares about Utah and what we're thinking."

Also reporting are the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (3/5, O'Donoghue) and [KSL-TV Salt Lake City](#) Salt Lake City (3/5, O'Donoghue).

### **POGO Outlines Results Of Interior Department Investigation.**

[Federal News Radio \(DC\)](#) (3/5) reports that "an investigation by the Project On Government Oversight suggests the Interior Department is losing out on billions of potential dollars" from its offshore drilling plan "thanks to a flawed bidding process that undervalues certain tracts." David Hilzenrath, POGO's Chief Investigative Reporter, "joined Eric White on Federal Drive with Tom Temin to talk more about the investigation."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Indian Tribes Push Ahead On Plans For Connecticut Casino.**

The [AP](#) (3/5, Haigh) reports that leaders of the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes staged a demolition ceremony at the proposed site of a "200,000-square foot gambling and entertainment venue" in East Windsor, Connecticut, as a sign that "they still intend to build a jointly owned casino near the border with Massachusetts despite delays in federal approvals." Mohegan Tribal Chairman Kevin Brown said, "We've been through too much already together to give up. And we're not going to." Both Brown and Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council Chairman Rodney Butler said they hope the casino will be open "inside of two years." The [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (3/5, Hallenbeck) reports that Brown added, "The federal government has no control over our ability to proceed," and Butler asserted, "There's nothing to stop construction." Several speakers at the ceremony "took aim at MGM Resorts' efforts to stop the East Windsor project." State Sen. Cathy Osten called MGM's "lobbying tactics 'disrespectful'" and "said 'not one thing was right' about MGM's efforts to block the East Windsor casino while proposing to pursue an alternative project in Bridgeport." Osten added, "They've been here before and they've lied to Connecticut residents," referring to a previous licensing agreement between MGM and Foxwoods.

The [Springfield \(MA\) Republican](#) (3/5, Kinney) reports that at the ceremony, East Windsor First Selectman Robert Maynard said, "Maybe we should thank MGM. ... Without them coming to Springfield, maybe the tribes would not be building here. And this is a great site." If the East Windsor casino is built, it "would be smaller than MGM Springfield, only 100,000 square feet versus 759,000 square feet of space." Brown said that demolishing an old movie theater at the site "is expected to take six weeks."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Judge Rules Against Tribes In Oregon Burial-Site Case.**

The [AP](#) (3/5) reports Magistrate Judge Youlee Yim You ruled the Yakama Nation and Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde failed to show that the Federal Highway Administration violated the Religious Freedom Restoration Act when it widened Highway 26, near Oregon's Mount Hood, east of Portland. The AP says the judge "handed a defeat" to the tribes, which "failed to show that the project substantially burdened their right to practice religion." The tribes said the FHWA "could have widened the road without bulldozing a site that included a stone altar and medicinal plants."

The [Oregonian](#) (3/5, Bernstein) reports that Oregon tribal leaders said Monday they will challenge the judge's ruling. Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde member Carol Logan called the ruling "heartbreaking."

### **Columbian Mammoth Tracks Found At Fossil Lake.**

The [AP](#) (3/5, Liedtke) reports that fossilized tracks by Columbian mammoths have been found "in an area of Lake County popular among fossil hunters that has earned the moniker Fossil Lake." The site "features remnants of the ancient animal's footprint trails, called trackways, and imprints

of ancient soil, known as paleosols." The study was "led by Greg Retallack, a University of Oregon professor from the university's Museum of Natural and Cultural History, along with several students in collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management and University of Louisiana-Lafayette."

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Plan To Open Drilling Off Pacific Northwest Draws Opposition.**

The [AP](#) (3/5) reports on protests to a Trump Administration proposal to expand offshore drilling off the Pacific Northwest coast, saying "the governors of Washington and Oregon and other top officials have slammed Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's plan to open 90 percent of the nation's offshore reserves to development by private companies." Opponents organized a hearing in Olympia Monday "ahead of an event hosted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to take public comment." Zinke had touted the economic benefits of the plan, saying those funds would help fund conservation efforts.

The [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (3/5, Connelly) reports that "a cross-country group of 227 legislators, representing 17 coastal states," wrote to US Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke Monday in opposition to the plan. However, they also "applauded Zinke for removing Florida's coasts from the program, which would allow drilling in more than 90 percent of America's Outer Continental Shelf waters." The bipartisan group of lawmakers cited concern over recent environmental disasters caused by offshore drilling.

### **Protesters Rally Against Trump's Oil Drilling Plans.**

The [AP](#) (3/5, Casey, Ramer) reports, "Dozens of protesters rallied in New Hampshire on Monday against" the proposal, "saying it poses a grave threat to the state's marine ecosystem and economy." Protesters carried signs "outside a Concord hotel that was hosting an information session by federal officials to explain the process that could lead to drilling for oil and gas on the Outer Continental Shelf in the North Atlantic" – "one of 23 the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is holding on drilling plans including one in Maine on Wednesday." BOEM Office of Strategic Resources Chief Renee Orr said, "There are a lot of passions around oil and gas drilling. People understand that it is a potentially risky activity," adding, "It's a proposal, a draft proposal. It's important for people to know that the process we are talking about is 10 to 15 years from where we are now to when there might be exploration happening offshore."

[New Hampshire Public Radio](#) (3/5, Ropeik) reports online that inside the meeting, "BOEM staff talked to residents about the science of their work, and how climate change will factor in." Orr said "she wants people to understand how Interior Sec. Ryan Zinke will finalize his drilling plan." Orr said that then "their comments then can be much more impactful than 'I hate oil and gas' or 'I love oil and gas.' That's really not informative to the decisions that he has to make and the balancing he has to do." The comments BOEM receives "in New Hampshire and nationwide are part of a 'winnowing process' for Zinke's final proposal," which is due in December, and which "may eliminate some areas from consideration," according to Orr.

### **Fishermen, Environmentalists To Blast Offshore Drilling Plan.**

The [AP](#) (3/4, Whittle, Villeneuve) reports opponents to the Trump administration's offshore drilling plan, including "fishing groups, environmentalists, politicians and tourism advocates," are preparing "to use a pair of public hearings this week to oppose the Trump administration's proposal to expand offshore drilling in the Atlantic and other ocean waters." Representatives of the Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will hold hearings in Maine and New Hampshire this week on the proposed drilling plan. In Maine, a coalition of various advocacy groups "will assemble before the Wednesday meeting to oppose drilling." The "motley group" has "some organizations that normally have competing interests, such as environmentalists and fishermen," but all share concerns over the impact of offshore drilling on the state's economy and natural resources. The [AP](#) (3/5) reports the BOEM will host meetings on the Trump administration's proposed offshore drilling plan on Monday in New Hampshire and on Wednesday in Maine.

### **Offshore Drilling Forum Draws The Governor And Big Crowd.**

[WVEC-TV](#) Hampton Roads, VA (3/6, Her) reports online on an offshore drilling forum at ODU in Norfolk, Virginia, where Gov. Ralph Northam (D-VA) "stood behind those against offshore

drilling.” Northam said, “We need to stop putting carbon into our atmosphere so we need to wean ourselves away from fossil fuel so the last thing we need to be doing right now is drilling off of our coast.”

#### **No Onshore Access? No Problem.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (3/5, King) summarizes how “state officials in California and Washington have vowed to wield their power against the build-out of new pipelines, cables and other coastal infrastructure to deliver crude ashore,” while “New Jersey lawmakers are working on their own legislative measure to block state permits that would support offshore extraction.” However, National Ocean Industries Association director Tim Charters said “the most promising new waters are close to existing transport options,” meaning the “industry has the ability to do floating production.” The eastern Gulf of Mexico is “the only swath of the third coast that remains off limits to drilling,” and as a result offshore firms see “the most potential” in the Norphlet play, according to US Chamber of Commerce executive Christopher Guith.

### **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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#### **Supreme Court Rules US Has Role In Texas-New Mexico Water Dispute.**

The [AP](#) (3/5) reports that the Supreme Court ruled on Monday that a lawsuit “pitting Texas against New Mexico and Colorado over access to water from the Rio Grande must be sent back to an arbitrator, also known as a special master, to resolve the dispute.” Justice Neil Gorsuch “noted the federal government has an interest in ensuring water commitments are kept involving one of North America’s longest rivers, citing an international agreement with Mexico and the decades-old Rio Grande Compact.” The AP adds that “the federal government has said it may pursue claims for compact violations involving the dispute. ‘A breach of the compact could jeopardize the federal government’s ability to satisfy its treaty obligations to Mexico,’ Gorsuch wrote.”

[Reuters](#) (3/6, Grzincic) reports that “the unanimous high court rejected a February 2017 recommendation by the special master it had appointed to handle the case, who had said that the Rio Grande Compact was a contract between the three states and did not give the United States any right to enforce it.”

The [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (3/5, Coleman) reports that Gorsuch’s opinion “said the federal government must be allowed to meet its water obligations – including an international agreement with Mexico – and a breach of the decades-old Rio Grande Compact would hinder that duty.” Texas “claims that New Mexico farmers and pecan growers illegally pump groundwater from below Elephant Butte Dam,” while New Mexico “claims that its water obligations to Texas are measured at the dam.” New Mexico “had filed a motion to dismiss Texas’ lawsuit, but in July a so-called special master appointed by the Supreme Court to analyze the case recommended the court reject that motion and allow the case to proceed.” The Supreme Court’s ruling “means that, in the words of the Court ‘the case is remanded to the Special Master for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.’”

#### **Judge Shoots Down Delta Tunnels Foes’ Request To Halt Key Hearing.**

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (3/5, Sabalow) reports that “a Sacramento County judge on Monday declined to temporarily stop the hearings that will decide the fate of Gov. Jerry Brown’s Delta tunnels project after its opponents sued alleging the process had been tainted by secret meetings.” In rejecting the request for a restraining order, Judge James P. Arguelles “said during a hearing in Sacramento that project opponents didn’t provide enough evidence to show that he needed to halt the water-rights hearings before the State Water Resources Control Board.” Tunnels opponents, “including the Sacramento County, Stockton, several Delta water agencies and a group of environmental organizations, sued last month, alleging the board met privately and illegally as far back as 2015 with representatives of the California Department of Water Resources and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the lead agencies planning the tunnels.”

### **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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#### **Trump To Consider Elephant Trophy Imports On ‘Case-By-Case’ Basis.**

[The Hill](#) (3/5, Green) reports that the Fish and Wildlife Service “announced last week that it will now consider all permits for importing elephant trophies from African nations on a ‘case-by-case

basis,' breaking from President Trump's earlier promises to maintain an Obama-era ban on the practice." In a formal memorandum issued on Thursday, the FWS "said it will withdraw its 2017 Endangered Species Act (ESA) findings for trophies of African elephants from Zimbabwe and Zambia, 'effective immediately.'" The memo said "the findings are no longer effective for making individual permit determinations for imports of sport-hunted African elephant trophies." In its place, agency will instead "grant or deny permits to import a sport-hunted trophy on a case-by-case basis."

## **National Park Service**

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### **Flight 93 Memorial Seeks 400 Volunteers To Plant Trees.**

The [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#) (3/5, Erdley) reports that "spokesmen for the Friends of the Flight 93 National Memorial and the National Park Service and Park Service Foundation put out a call Monday for 400 volunteers to register for a workday at the memorial on April 27 and 28." The volunteers will "join an ongoing effort to plant 150,000 trees to reforest the site that had been ravaged by surface mining prior to Sept. 11, 2011." John Bernstiel, volunteer coordinate at the memorial, said, "This event is mostly conducted by volunteers and highlights what this memorial is all about — people coming together to make a difference, building a living memorial to honor the 40 crew members and passengers of Flight 93, and healing this piece of land as we continue to heal as a country."

### **No Food, Lodging Expected At Sperry Complex This Summer.**

The [AP](#) (3/5) reports that "even though the Sperry Chalet dining hall was only lightly damaged in a wildfire that gutted the Sperry dormitory in Glacier National Park, park officials don't expect to have any concessions at the hall this summer due to trail and other needed rehab." Crews are "not expected to finish clearing dead and downed trees along trails burned by the fire until late summer or early fall." Kevin Warrington, the concessionaire for both the Sperry and Granite Park chalets, "says he doesn't see any feasible way to provide concessions at the Sperry complex dining hall this season."

### **New Historical Marker To Tell Truth Of Nathan Bedford Forrest, Slave Trade In Memphis.**

[USA Today](#) (3/5, Waters) reports that "a new downtown Memphis historical marker will 'tell the whole story' about Nathan Bedford Forrest and the antebellum slave trade in Memphis." The new marker, "sponsored by Calvary Episcopal Church, Rhodes College and the National Park Service, will be unveiled and dedicated April 4."

### **Black Canyon Of The Gunnison National Park Plans Entry Fee Increase.**

[Fort Collins \(CO\) Coloradoan](#) (3/5, Marmaduke) reports that the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park will "increase its entry fees this spring to fund infrastructure upgrades, park officials announced Monday." Park officials sought public input on the proposed fee hike in June 2017. According to a news release from the park, "new people submitted comments, and most of them favored a fee increase."

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **White House Announces Major Disaster Declaration.**

The [Talane \(ASM\)](#) (3/2) reports that President Trump has "declared that a major disaster exists in the territory of American Samoa and ordered federal assistance to supplement recovery efforts in the territory due to Tropical Storm Gita from February 7 to February 12, 2018." The [Talane \(ASM\)](#) (3/2) reports that Governor Lolo M. Moliga welcomed the announcement. He said, "I would be remiss if I fail to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to President Donald Trump for accepting my earnest request for a major disaster declaration to ensure that the needs of Americans of Samoan ancestry and businesses victimized by Tropical Storm Gita are comprehensively addressed thus restoring hope for our people."

### **Guam DOE Prepares For Furloughs, Worst-case Scenario.**

The [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (3/1, Eugenio) reports that "the Guam Department of Education on Thursday said it is preparing for possible furloughs, but hopes the Legislature and Adelup will find



a way to spare them from further financial cuts." The Guam Education Board "can vote on a furlough during its March 13 special meeting." According to Superintendent Jon Fernandez, "prior to that, Guam DOE will be 'status quo.'"

### **With Cruise Ship Arrivals To USVI Down 20 To 30 Percent, Mapp, Tourism Officials Head To Seatrade In Florida ↵**

The [Virgin Islands Consortium \(VIR\)](#) (3/2) reports that the U.S. Virgin Islands Governor Kenneth Mapp will "depart the territory Saturday to meet with cruise industry leaders ahead of the annual Seatrade Cruise Global conference." "to discuss most aspects of cruising in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Lieutenant Governor Osbert Potter will serve as acting governor until Mapp's return to on Monday. During Mapp's visit, "he will meet with the leadership of the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association, top executives of several cruise lines, and Virgin Islanders in the South Florida area who he will debrief on the territory's recovery from Hurricanes Irma and Maria."

### **Israeli Startup To Lead Marshall Islands Cryptocurrency ICO.**

[Globes](#) (3/1) reports that "Israeli fintech startup Neema is working with the Marshall Islands in order to issue one of the world's first legal cryptocurrency tenders – the SOV." David Paul, minister-in-assistance to the president of the Marshall Islands said "The Marshall Islands is the first nation to adopt a transparent crypto monetary system, and we are proud of it. We are making our economy more resilient and payments more transparent."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#).

### **Bill To Help Spokane's Marshallese Population Passes Washington Legislature.**

[Spokane Public Radio \(WA\)](#) (3/1, Nadvornick) reports that "the Washington House has given approval to a bill that would provide members of Spokane's Marshallese population with subsidized health care." Rep. Marcus Riccelli, "one of the co-sponsors of the bill, argued there's a moral obligation to help the Marshallese." Rep. Sharon Santos "argued that, beyond the moral question, there's also a public health benefit." However, opponents, such as Rep. Joe Schmick, "say the responsibility is not the state's."

### **Local Students Debate Politics At The Junior Statesmen Winter Congress Convention.**

The [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (3/5) reports that "a delegation of eight Virgin Islands high school students recently attended the Junior State of America's 'MidSoHio' (Midwest, Southeast and Ohio River Valley) Winter Congress Convention in Washington." The students "spent five days in the nation's capital, where they debated dozens of student-drafted bills during a mock-legislative session, visited cultural landmarks, and met with leaders including Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett, Congressman and civil rights pioneer John Lewis, and Douglas Domenech, Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas at the Interior Department."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Nominee Returns To Earth For USGS Job.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (3/5, Doyle) reports that former astronaut James Reilly II on Tuesday will face lawmakers on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee for a confirmation hearing to serve as director of the U.S. Geological Survey. Reilly's "confirmation does not appear to face any serious turbulence, though the job he's aiming for will surely test him." The hearing will give Reilly "a chance to map out his vision for leading approximately 8,200 full-time USGS employees," and "it will also give lawmakers a chance to press the political novice on how he would defend an agency that sometimes feels unloved."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Colorado Springs \(CO\) Gazette](#) (3/5, Bunch).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Ryan Zinke Spent His First Year In Office Selling Off Our Public Lands.**

[Vox](#) (3/5, Katz) reports that "from his recent proposal to open almost all of America's coast to offshore drilling to rolling back federal protections on national monuments," Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "taken extraordinary steps to put public lands in private hands in service of fossil fuel companies and other industries." Meanwhile, Zinke has "caught the attention of government



watchdog groups that are already calling for ethics investigations into his activities.” According to the article, “allegations of political favoritism and loyalty to industry are recurring themes in five of Zinke’s biggest decisions to date, which affect the lives of millions of Americans.”

### **Guest Opinion: Zinke Aims To Desecrate National Monuments.**

In an op-ed for the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (3/5, Jarnevic), Michael Jarnevic, a retired U.S. Army sergeant major, claims that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s proposals “to shrivel multiple national monuments is nothing more than caving to the nefarious interests of the extractive resource industry – an industry that has been a consistent foe of wildlife and wildlands.” Jarnevic urges Zinke, “who gazes in the mirror and perceives himself as a latter-day Teddy Roosevelt,” to “understand that his behavior is the antithesis of the mind and soul of Teddy.” In Jarnevic’s view, “if alive today, Roosevelt would be aghast, angry, and merciless in his condemnation of Zinke as a tarnished utensil of the Trump administration.”

### **EDITORIAL Interior Secretary Makes An Odd Visit.**

The [Greene County \(PA\) Observer-Reporter](#) (3/6) editorializes that “much about” Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s “trip to East Bethlehem fire hall...was baffling – to local residents, the media and, likely, those who planned his appearance.” The paper observes that “the event had the feel of a hastily arranged news conference/town hall meeting/political opportunity.” It questions whether “this withholding of information have been intentional, to prevent protesters from descending on Fredericktown?”

### **Dan Haar: Tribes Start East Windsor Demolition But Casino Could Be Eight Years Away.**

Columnist Dan Haar asserts in the [Stamford \(CT\) Advocate](#) (3/5, Haar) that actually opening a proposed casino in East Windsor “could take eight years” because of “two federal lawsuits, financing and actual construction.” Haar also opines that a bill in the Connecticut state legislature that would open up Connecticut’s casino industry to bidding “has a low chance of passing as long as it revokes the East Windsor casino license.” Haar concludes that the two-year timeline announced by the tribes is “a wildly optimistic schedule from the partnership that took two years to pick a town.”

### **Trump Energy Plan Is A Climate Changer.**

L. Todd Wood writes in a [Washington Times](#) (3/5, Wood) analysis that President Trump’s energy policy is “rightfully” centered on the idea that “energy independence is a national security priority.” Wood praises “Mr. Trump’s embrace of clean coal and associated technologies, to the delight of coal miners in West Virginia and elsewhere,” and “the revolutionary technology that goes along with the coal.” According to Wood, “Carbon capture provides the Trump administration the ability to achieve two of its stated policy goals at the same time. While enabling the resurgence of American coal to support energy independence, the development of such technologies also ensures Washington will lead the world in both the adoption and promotion of clean coal.” Wood concludes that “The policy of using carbon capture tax credits to spur technological advancement in the private sector for burning clean coal will stimulate the market and help scale up the effort to achieve the end goal of Trump energy policy – not just energy independence, but energy dominance, all the while adding to the Trump economic boom.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Interior Secretary Zinke Moves To Protect Big-Game Migration Routes.* [Pew Charitable Trusts](#) (3/5, Rait, Skroch).
- *What Would A Democratic House Do To Protect Our Environment?.* [Pacific Standard](#) (3/5, Perry)
- *What We Need Besides Lawsuits To Protect National Monuments From Trump.* [Hawaii Tribune-Herald](#) (3/6, Frank).

## **Top National News**

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### **Trump: Canada, Mexico To Face New Tariffs Unless NAFTA Deal Is Reached.**

Media reports shed a mostly unfavorable light on what they see as an attempt by the President to use the threat of steel and aluminum tariffs to gain leverage in the ongoing NAFTA talks. The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, Paletta), for example, says Trump “further expanded his personal trade

war," the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/5, Lee) that he is "using" the tariffs "as a bargaining chip in the bogged-down talks," and [CNN Money](#) (3/5, Gillespie) that they are his "latest negotiating tactic to make Mexico and Canada accept his demands." To [Politico](#) (3/5, Nelson), Trump "lashed out...against two of America's top international trading partners." Politico goes on to bemoan the President's "harsh" rhetoric toward Mexico, citing "his speech kicking off his 2016 campaign, in which Trump said Mexico was sending drugs and rapists into the US." Under the headline "Mexico Had Great Night At The Oscars. President Trump Still Tweeted Smear," meanwhile, [USA Today](#) (3/5, Puente) reports that "Mexico, America's southern neighbor regularly slammed by America's president, nevertheless got some love from Oscar Sunday night." Then "early Monday...Trump issued a negative tweet against Mexico. Again."

Trump said on [Twitter](#), "We have large trade deficits with Mexico and Canada. NAFTA, which is under renegotiation right now, has been a bad deal for U.S.A. Massive relocation of companies & jobs. Tariffs on Steel and Aluminum will only come off if new & fair NAFTA agreement is signed. Also, Canada must... treat our farmers much better. Highly restrictive. Mexico must do much more on stopping drugs from pouring into the US. They have not done what needs to be done. Millions of people addicted and dying." Trump also [tweeted](#), "To protect our Country we must protect American Steel! #AMERICA FIRST". Later in the day, the [AP](#) (3/5, Miller) reports, the President "opened the door to exempting" both Canada and Mexico "from the planned tariffs, telling reporters, 'that would be, I would imagine, one of the points that we'll negotiate.'" However, he added, "If they aren't going to make a fair NAFTA deal, we're just going to leave it this way."

In fact, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/5, Lee) reports, despite loud opposition from Republicans and business groups Trump "seemed only to stiffen his resolve on the metals tariffs" yesterday. [Reuters](#) (3/5, Cornwell, Brice) notes that "without elaborating," the President told reporters, "We're not backing down," and "I don't think you're going to have a trade war." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/5, story 4, 2:05, Muir) similarly reported that the tariffs "roiled the financial markets and outraged American allies and Republican leaders," but "the President told us...he's not backing down." Trump was shown saying, "People have to understand: Our country, on trade, has been ripped off by virtually every country in the world, whether it's friend or enemy. Everybody."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/5, Mauldin) and [The Hill](#) (3/5, Shelbourne), among other news outlets, run similar reports on Trump's trade gambit, while [Reuters](#) (3/5, Cornwell, Brice) says he "was expected to finalize the planned tariffs later in the week, posing a tough challenge for US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland and Mexican Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo." The three "were meeting in Mexico City on Monday to wrap up the latest round of discussions on revamping" NAFTA. Guajardo said on [Twitter](#), "Mexico shouldn't be included in steel & aluminum tariffs. It's the wrong way to incentivize the creation of a new & modern NAFTA." Canadian Finance Minister Bill Morneau, meanwhile, "said the country was negotiating on NAFTA with a partner that has 'changed the terms of the discussion.'"

[CNN Money](#) (3/5, Gillespie) notes that Freeland also weighed in, "Should restrictions be imposed on Canadian steel and aluminum products, Canada will take responsive measures to defend its trade interests and workers." The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, Paletta) indicates Trump's tariffs "are expected to hit Canada particularly hard," as "it is the top exporter to US markets of both steel and aluminum."

The [New York Times](#) (3/5, Swanson) reports that Jennifer Hillman, a professor at Georgetown University Law Center, cautioned that "opening up exceptions for countries like Canada and Mexico for other factors like Nafta could also invite more challenges at the World Trade Organization." Added Hillman, "Unequivocally, I think there will be cases filed at the WTO, and there is plenty of ground to challenge this."

The [New York Times](#) (3/5, Tankersley) also reports that Trump's "fixation with America's widening trade deficit is fueling his decision to impose stiff tariffs on steel and aluminum imports," but "only a small group of experts share Mr. Trump's fixation, and few see tariffs as an effective tool to narrow the so-called trade gap."

***Anti-Tariff White House Officials Mount "Last-Ditch Effort" To Convince Trump.*** [Politico](#) (3/5, Restuccia, White, Cook) reports "economic adviser Gary Cohn and other free-trade advocates inside the White House and the Treasury Department are mounting a last-ditch effort to blunt the impact of Trump's head-turning decision, even as the president insisted Monday that he wasn't going to be convinced out of it." Cohn "and like-minded officials in the administration are hoping the parade of senior GOP lawmakers, donors, lobbyists and business groups loudly opposing the pending decision will convince Trump" to reverse himself. Politico adds that "one person close to the effort to change Trump's mind said over the weekend that he's confident the final proposal

will be more nuanced than the one the president announced last week." Said "the person," "I'd bet my life that's not where it winds up."

**"Official" Says Trump "Somewhat Open" To Narrowing Tariffs' "Scope And Effects."** The [New York Times](#) (3/5, Swanson, Landler, Haberman) reports the White House is "devising ways to potentially soften the impact of the measures on major trading partners." In fact, "the intense maneuvering, which began before Mr. Trump's unexpected announcement of the tariffs last Thursday, is likely to delay any formal rollout of the measures until next week, according to several officials who have been briefed on the deliberations." The Times cites "one White House official" who said "Trump has heard all sides' arguments, but his view has remained steadfast." Even so, adds the "official," Trump "is mindful enough of the arguments against potentially tanking the stock market that he has been somewhat open to a move to narrow the scope and effects of the tariffs while avoiding the perception that he was relenting."

Brit Hume said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/5), "My guess is he will go through with the tariffs that he's announced. He may soften the effect on some of our allies as President George W. Bush did. I think these tariffs on steel and aluminum are going to happen. The question then really becomes whether they in themselves will cause as much havoc as some are predicting. I very much doubt that. The worry is what happens after that. Whether in fact the retaliation meets with retaliation again from him and pretty soon we have a trade war. There isn't anybody I know of that thinks a trade war is a good idea. ... My guess is the President will pull back from that and this will be another example of the President...blustering talk and threats and so on and it ends up being less than meets the eye. But we will see."

Tom Bevan of Real Clear Politics was asked on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/5) if Trump will moderate the tariffs in any way. Bevan said, "It is Trump, so who knows? We don't know exactly what he is going to do and even people around him don't necessarily know what he is going to do. I think he might, a little bit. This is a campaign promise. In fact, this is something that Trump talked about for decades about America getting ripped off and needing to have the kind of good deals put in place and to have fair trade. I think by and large he looks like he won't back off. I expect he won't. He may moderate on the margins, maybe on the numbers. This is a first real break he's had with his party on economic issues. ... He's got almost no support in his party for this. But I think that doesn't matter to him. I think he is still going to push forward with them."

**Ryan Urges Trump To Reconsider As GOP Lawmakers, Allies Mount Effort To Stop Tariffs.** [The Hill](#) (3/5, Fabian) reports the President "is facing mounting pressure from Republicans in Congress and business groups to go back on his decision," and [Politico](#) (3/5, Bade, Palmer) that "Republicans are frantically lobbying" the President "to reconsider."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/5, story 2, 2:50, Garrett), which referred to "a rare public split" between the Trump and Speaker Ryan, noted a Ryan spokeswoman said the Wisconsin lawmaker "is 'urging the White House to not advance with this plan. The new tax reform law has boosted the economy, and we certainly don't want to jeopardize those gains.'" White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders was asked to comment, and told reporters, "We have a great relationship with Speaker Ryan. We're going to continue to have one. But that doesn't mean we have to agree on everything. The President has been committed and talked about this for many years."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/5, Decker), [National Review](#) (3/5, Crowe), [US News & World Report](#) (3/5, Levy), [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/5, Hughes) and [Axios](#) (3/5, Swan), among other news outlets, run similar accounts of Ryan's criticism, while, [The Hill](#) (3/5, Zanon) notes Ryan's office also "blasted out an email earlier Monday highlighting a [news article](#) that attributed a drop in the stock markets to Trump's tariffs announcement." The [Washington Times](#) (3/5, Miller) says "the White House...played down the rift," and [The Hill](#) (3/5, Fabian) that Sanders "scoffed" at Republicans who claim to be surprised about Trump's trade views. Said Sanders, "I think they should have been well-aware. This is, again, something the president hasn't been shy about."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, Werner) says "congressional Republicans are maneuvering to stop...Trump from levying harsh tariffs on steel and aluminum imports," with "members of the House Ways and Means Committee...circulating a letter arguing against the tariffs" and "high-ranking Senate Republicans" voicing "their opposition." The Post adds that "it's unclear whether the GOP pushback will have any effect on Trump," and remarks on the fact that "for all of the controversies Trump has faced, the tariffs decision marks one of few times he has taken a step that runs directly counter to Republicans' legislative and economic goals."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/5, Lawler) reports "House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady said Monday that he and other House Republicans will ask...Trump to

exempt some countries from promised steel and aluminum tariffs, but stopped short of suggesting that Congress could pursue a legislative response." Pressed on the latter option, Brady said, "My view is we stay focused on helping the president tailor these tariffs to the maximum effect."

[Roll Call](#) (3/5, McPherson) reports, meanwhile, that "Congress is unlikely to act before the president's plan takes effect," but "congressional Republicans are considering actions they might be able to take down the line to subvert the administration's trade policy." Potential actions "include explore possible changes to the provision of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 – known as Section 232 – that allows the president to impose unlimited tariffs if a federal investigations determines it poses a threat to national security."

Also yesterday, [Bloomberg News](#) (3/5, Edgerton) reports, Sen. Mike Lee "[tweeted](#) about his bill to limit the president's ability to impose tariffs without approval from Congress," writing, "In a government system with checks and balances, the President should not have the power to unilaterally levy or alter tariffs."

Rep. Jackie Walorski said on [CNBC's Closing Bell](#) (3/5), "My district is in danger right now of losing bonuses from tax reform that they were given because the economy is booming. We all know we're on this track that's very positive: regulation reform, tax reform, companies expanding, but in my district...when the President started talking 25 percent here and 10 percent there, in the RV industry, the recreational vehicle, boating, trailer manufacturing – we have one of the largest manufacturing districts – employees right now aren't looking at bonuses, they're looking at jobs hung up, jobs potentially leaving, orders in the queue, expansion plans downsized. There's a cost to this. All I'm saying is let's be balanced."

[Townhall](#) (3/5, Pavlich) reports "it isn't just politicians expressing concern. Conservative, grassroots organizations are as well," and [USA Today](#) (3/5, Jackson) that "many Republican allies of Trump oppose the tariff plan." Said David McIntosh, president of the "anti-regulation" Club for Growth, "For every steel worker job that might be saved because of a tariff, our country will lose even more American jobs in auto plants, construction, and so many other industries." McIntosh also said that "tariffs will also harm the pro-growth effects of the tax cuts, stall the economy, incite a trade war, and help hand the (2018 congressional) election to the Democrats."

Max Boot, in a [Washington Post](#) (3/5) column titled "Imposing Tariffs Is Stupid Policy," bemoans the fact that "Trump has loudly and repeatedly signaled his intention to abandon more than 70 years of America's commitment to free trade" and that "welcomes a trade war – he says that 'trade wars are good, and easy to win' – but no serious economist would agree. Neither does Wall Street."

**Stocks Finish Higher.** The [New York Times](#) (3/5, Swanson, Landler, Haberman) reports that one of Trump's "all-important barometers – the stock market – rebounded on Monday after falling sharply immediately after the announcement of the tariffs last week as the Republican dissent fueled optimism that Mr. Trump would ultimately reverse course." The Times adds that "a person close to the White House said that the president was itching to impose tariffs, and that Monday's stock market rebound had reassured Mr. Trump that he was in the right."

[CNBC](#) reported "stocks rose on Monday, erasing earlier losses, as worries about a potential trade war waned." The Dow "closed 336.70 points higher at 24,874.76" and the S&P 500 "rose 1.1 percent to 2,720.94 after briefly trading lower." Harley-Davidson, "a closely watched stock amid the tariff news, rose 2.4 percent." The Nasdaq "advanced 1 percent to close at 7,330.70." Noting Trump's comments on NAFTA, CNBC added that he "appeared to be opening the door for negotiations on tariffs," while Ryan expressed his opposition to the President's plans. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/5, Wursthorn, Kantchev) runs a similar story under the headline "US Stocks Higher As Trade-War Fears Ease," though [Bloomberg News](#) (3/4, Potter, Haigh) says investors "continued fretting about the potential for a full-fledged trade war."

**Europe Could Retaliate Against Harley-Davidson, Kentucky Bourbon, Levi's.** The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, McAuley) reports European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker has already spoken of "potential consequences" for Trump's move, including "tariffs on a number of American products that included Harley-Davidson motorcycles, Kentucky bourbon and Levi's blue jeans." Said Juncker, "We can also do stupid." A "European official speaking on the condition of anonymity" tells the Post, "Those were just examples. ... The list has been in preparation for some time, and of course more products are potentially to be targeted. Basically, it's more or less one-third agricultural products, one-third steel- and aluminum-related products, and one-third other products."

As [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/5, story 4, 2:05, Muir) put it, that would be "bourbon from Senate Leader Mitch McConnell's home state of Kentucky. Harley-Davidson motorcycles, made

in...Ryan's home state of Wisconsin, and jeans from Levi-Strauss, which just happens to be headquartered in Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi's San Francisco district."

**Hill Analysis: Tariffs Could Boost Trump In Rustbelt In 2020.** [The Hill](#) (3/5, Stanage) reports "Trump's proposed tariffs on steel and aluminum imports horrify Republican leaders in Congress – but they could yet pay political dividends" for him, as the move "has significant appeal in the Rust Belt states that were pivotal to his shock 2016 election win." In fact, "some Democrats in the region worry that senior figures in their party, especially those whose bases are in affluent coastal cities, are underestimating the political potency of Trump's announcement." Already, "some prominent Democrats from industrial states have backed Trump on the tariffs, including Sen. Bob Casey (Pa.) and Reps. Tim Ryan and Marci Kaptur, both of Ohio." Moreover, "the nation's largest federation of unions, the AFL-CIO, also welcomed Trump's proposal."

**Examiner's Wegmann: Navarro "A Democrat" And "A Political Opportunist."** Philip Wegmann writes in the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/5, Wegmann) that Trump trade adviser Peter Navarro "is a smart man, at least on paper," as well as "a Democrat" who "ran for office in San Diego, Calif., three times on a Democratic ticket, losing each race." Wegmann adds that "liberal ideas animate his thinking," and "more than anything" he is "is a political opportunist," having gone "from liberal, anti-trade Democrat to...Trump's chief trade advisor." To Wegmann, "So far, the economy has been this president's saving grace. The tariffs will put an end to that."

Yesterday morning, Navarro said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (3/5), "The mission here is to save our aluminum and steel industries for the purposes of the preserving our national security and out economic security. That's what all of this is about. We have imports coming in across the globe threatening those two industries. As the President said, we can't have a country without an aluminum steel industry."

**WSJournal, ABC News Highlight Study Finding Tariffs Will Kill 146,000 US Jobs.** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/5) criticizes Commerce Secretary Ross' statements indicating tariffs on steel and aluminum imports will have little effect on US consumers. The Journal quotes Ross as saying, "I just bought a can of Campbell's soup today at the 7-Eleven. It was \$1.99 for the can. There's about 10 cents worth of tin plate steel in this can. So if it goes up 25%, that's a tiny fraction of one penny. That's not a noticeable thing." The Journal, however, goes on to note a [study](#) by Joseph Francois and Laura Baughman released by the Washington-based Trade Partnership, which found the new tariffs will lead to a net loss of 179,000 US jobs.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/5, story 4, 2:05, Muir) also remarked on the "new analysis...by the non-partisan Trade Partnership," which "projects the Trump tariffs on steel and aluminum would result in a net loss of 146,000 American jobs in a single year."

### **Trump: Obama Launched Russia Investigation To Aid Hillary Clinton.**

[USA Today](#) (3/5, Jackson) reports that in a tweet Monday, President Trump argued that former President Obama and his team launched the Russia investigation to aid Hillary Clinton's campaign, "describing it as a scandal bigger than Watergate." Trump [tweeted](#), "Why did the Obama Administration start an investigation into the Trump Campaign (with zero proof of wrongdoing) long before the Election in November? ... Wanted to discredit so Crooked H would win. ... Unprecedented. Bigger than Watergate! Plus, Obama did NOTHING about Russian meddling." Former CIA Director Brennan replied in a [tweet](#), telling Trump that his claim is "a great example of your paranoia, constant misrepresentation of the facts, and increased anxiety and panic (rightly so) about the Mueller investigation. ... When will those in Congress and the 30 percent of Americans who still support you realize you are a charlatan?"

[Politico](#) (3/5, Nelson) says Trump "has made a habit of lashing out at Obama and of complaining about the ongoing investigations," which he has labeled as a "witch hunt." His tweet Monday runs "counter to public reporting that Obama's Justice Department was in the midst of investigating the Russian connections of Trump campaign advisers Carter Page and George Papadopoulos as the 2016 campaign was ongoing." The [AP](#) (3/5, Tucker, Woodward) says Trump "has given a problematic account of how the Russia investigation began." The AP says that despite Trump's "conspiratorial tone, it's not unusual for investigations to start without proof. They tend to start with suspicions." Moreover, there has been "no evidence" that Obama "used this matter to try to help Clinton in the election."

**Australian Diplomat Who Prompted FBI's Russia Investigation Has Ties To Clinton.** [The Hill](#) (3/5, Solomon, Spann) reports that former Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, "whose tip in 2016 prompted the Russia-Trump investigation, previously arranged one of the largest foreign donations to Bill and Hillary Clinton's charitable efforts, documents show." Downer's "role in securing \$25 million in aid from his country to help the Clinton Foundation fight AIDS is



chronicled in decade-old government memos archived on the Australian foreign ministry's website." Downer who now serves as Australia's ambassador to London, "provided the account of a conversation with Trump campaign adviser George Papadopoulos at a London bar in 2016 that became the official reason the FBI opened the Russia counterintelligence probe."

Sean Hannity said on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (3/5), "You start connecting the dots and you can begin to see Clinton has her hands in everything here. All of the evidence that was used to start and further the Russia investigation all came from cronies and associates – whether people that were being paid by the Clintons or knew the Clintons."

**Judicial Watch Sues DOJ For Records Regarding Bruce Ohr.** The [Daily Caller](#) (3/5, Ross) reports that Judicial Watch "is suing the Department of Justice for records regarding Bruce Ohr, the recently-demoted DOJ official who met with dossier author Christopher Steele prior to the 2016 election." The conservative watchdog is seeking "records of Ohr's contacts with Steele as well as with employees of Fusion GPS, the opposition research firm that commissioned the dossier." In addition, Judicial Watch wants "Ohr's calendar entries and all communications between the attorney general's office and Fusion GPS and Nellie Ohr."

**House Republicans Back Away From Plans To Hold Bannon In Contempt.** The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, Demirjian) reports that people from both parties with knowledge of the House Intelligence Committee's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election say House Republicans "are backing away from plans to potentially hold former White House strategist Stephen K. Bannon in contempt of Congress for refusing to fully comply with" a panel subpoena. According to people familiar with the matter, there has been "zero urgency to pursue further action against Bannon or even discuss the matter with House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.), whose buy-in is critical to issuing such a citation." With "committee Republicans pushing for a fast close to the Russia probe, many panel members doubt that Ryan and [Rep. K. Michael] Conaway [the top Republican in the investigation] will actually deliver on a contempt citation for Bannon."

### **Tillerson: "We Have More To Do" To Address Russian Disinformation.**

Rich Edson reported on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/5) that Congress allocated \$120 million to the State Department to "counter foreign efforts to interfere in American politics. The Department has spent none of that money...according to the [New York Times](#)." The Department's Global Engagement Center (GEC) "only last week secured \$40 million of that dedicated funding." A senior State Department official says the GEC has started assigning that \$40 million to projects, and "has, in the meantime, used other funding to counter misinformation." Meanwhile, Edson noted that the Times also reported that "none" of the GEC's 23 analysts speak Russian. A "senior State Department official counters that the acting coordinator and deputy coordinator speak Russian, and the chief of staff is an expert on Russia." While meeting with foreign ministers from three Baltic states, Secretary of State Tillerson "acknowledged his department must better address Russia's disinformation campaign." Fox showed Tillerson stating, "We have more to do."

**Putin: Russia Will Never Extradite Those Indicted For Election Meddling.** [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/5) reported Russian President Vladimir Putin says his country "will never extradite" the 13 Russians indicted by the US for meddling in the 2016 US presidential election. In a TV interview, Putin said he has no idea what those individuals did, and claimed they don't represent Russia.

**Woman Jailed In Thailand Seeks US Asylum, Claims To Have Evidence Of Russian Interference.** [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/5) reported Anastasia Vashukevich, a woman from Belarus currently imprisoned in Bangkok, is seeking US asylum, claiming to have evidence of Russian meddling in the 2016 election. Correspondent Ivan Watson spoke to Vashukevich, reporting that "she says that she witnessed meetings between the Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska and at least three Americans, who she refused to name. She says they discussed plans to affect the US elections, but she wouldn't give any further information because she fears she could be deported back to Russia." The [New York Times](#) (3/5, Paddock) reports that Vashukevich said Monday that she has "more than 16 hours of audio recordings that could help shed light on Russian meddling in United States elections."

**WTimes Analysis: Fear About Integrity Of Nation's Election System At An All-Time High.** The [Washington Times](#) (3/5, Boylan) reports that "fear and confusion over the integrity of the nation's election systems are running at an all-time high." While Democrats "say the Trump administration has not taken the threat seriously enough," Republicans blame the Obama Administration "for failing to act in 2016." Meanwhile, technology experts "fault the Department of Homeland Security and social media companies for failing to get a handle on the threat."

## **With Trump Now A Candidate, Federal Employees Face Political Restrictions.**

The [Washington Post](#) (3/5, Yoder) reports that the Office of Special Counsel, "a federal agency that enforces the Hatch Act limits on allowable political activities by federal employees, said Monday that additional restrictions now apply because President Trump is officially running for reelection in 2020. For Hatch Act purposes, that occurred last week with the appointment of Brad Parscale...to manage the president's reelection bid. The OSC had said earlier that Trump's filing of campaign paperwork a year ago with the Federal Election Commission had not met that threshold." The "additional restrictions apply to most employees only when they are on duty and/or in a federal workplace: They may not engage in political activity directed at the success or failure of such a party, candidate or group."

## **Editorial Wrap-Up**

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### **New York Times.**

*"Donald Trump's Tunnel Vision."* In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (3/5) decries President Trump's decision to urge House Speaker Ryan "to scrap start-up money for an additional rail tunnel between New York and New Jersey, a project essential to the economic health not only of those two states but of the entire country." Citing its own reporting and that of the Washington Post, the Times says Trump "did it to spite the Senate Democratic leader, Chuck Schumer of New York, whose sin is failure to fall in lock step with Mr. Trump on a variety of issues. This is foolishness." The Times adds that this is "but one instance among many of the president showing zero concern for the region and the city that created his wealth and his reputation."

*"Demagogues Win As Europe's Populist Tide Sweeps Italy."* A [New York Times](#) (3/5) editorial says Italy's elections were "the latest powerful wave in a tidal turn of anti-immigrant, anti-European Union and antidemocratic fervor that has ravaged European politics." The Italian election, it adds, "was a stinging rejection of traditional parties, and of national leadership that has been frustrated by a flood of migrants from Africa and the Middle East and stymied by years of stagnation."

### **Washington Post.**

*"Dodd-Frank Might Just Survive Republicans. Good."* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/5) says that while President Trump said early in his Administration that he intended to do "a big number on Dodd-Frank," Republicans can change the law "only to the extent consistent with attracting sufficient Democratic votes." The Post adds that the "lowest common denominator may be" a bill "moving through the Senate with bipartisan support," to "grant regulatory relief to small banks while letting some big ones, but not the biggest, go along for the ride." The Post questions the wisdom and the necessity of the measure, and expresses concern that it "sets a precedent for the biggest institutions to demand lower capital requirements the next time Congress takes up the issue." However, for now, the bill "could represent the high-water mark of this Republican deregulatory wave," and albeit "weakened, the basic Dodd-Frank regulatory framework might just survive two years of Republican control of the presidency and Congress, which certainly beats the alternative."

*"It's Up to Merkel And Macron To Rescue Democracy In Europe."* A [Washington Post](#) (3/5) editorial says Italy's election "delivered another body blow to Europe's already-wobbly democratic center." The "good news of the weekend was that a new coalition government" led by German Chancellor Angela Merkel "was finally approved by members of her partner Social Democratic Party." The Post argues that "it now falls to Ms. Merkel to seek with [French President Emmanuel] Macron reforms that will promote growth in struggling EU countries such as Italy, while continuing to defend liberal democratic principles."

*"Larry Hogan Leads A Breakthrough For Metro."* In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/5) says that after appearing to "regard subways and buses as white elephants sponging up cash better used to build roads" during his campaign, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan "has made a break with his past and can credibly claim to have been the decisive factor in turning the regional tide in favor of a workable bailout for Metro, the national capital area's ailing transit system." The Post says the burden now rests with "Republicans in Richmond, whose 66-seat majority in Virginia's House of Delegates was cut to 51 seats in last fall's elections." They "would be wise to take a cue from Mr. Hogan's leadership."

### **Wall Street Journal.**



**“Warren Democrats For Wall Street.”** A [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/5) editorial says Senate progressives, led by Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Sherrod Brown say a Senate bill to grant regulatory relief to small banks is a gift to Wall Street. However, citing the bill’s 12 Democratic co-sponsors, the Journal calls it progress that some Democrats are breaking with Warren.

**“Treasury’s Qualcomm Reversal.”** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/5) editorializes that Cfiu’s decision on Broadcom’s proposed acquisition of Qualcomm was correct and marks a reversal of the Treasury Department’s position of last week that it would not postpone the shareholder vote. The Journal argues that if Broadcom wants to obtain Cfiu approval, it must show that its bid for Qualcomm will not threaten US national security.

**“Professor Ross’s Soup Can Economics.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/5) criticizes Commerce Secretary Ross’ statements indicating tariffs on steel and aluminum imports will have little effect on US consumers. The Journal quotes **Ross** as saying, “I just bought a can of Campbell’s soup today at the 7-Eleven. It was \$1.99 for the can. There’s about 10 cents worth of tin plate steel in this can. So if it goes up 25%, that’s a tiny fraction of one penny. That’s not a noticeable thing.” The Journal, however, goes on to note a [study](#) by Joseph Francois and Laura Baughman released by the Washington-based Trade Partnership, which found the new tariffs will lead to a net loss of 179,000 US jobs.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Trump Tariffs Spark GOP Rift](#)

[US Government Intervenes In Broadcom’s Bid For Qualcomm](#)

[Can a Onetime Nader-Supporting “Bomb Thrower” Win Arizona’s Senate Seat? Democrats Hope So](#)

[Next Up for Amazon: Checking Accounts](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[Trump Reaffirms Commitment to Tariffs but Opens Door to Compromise](#)

[Trump’s Hopes of Being the “Neutral Guy” in the Mideast Seem Long Gone](#)

[Behind Public Persona, the Real Xi Jinping Is a Guarded Secret](#)

[Trying Again, de Blasio Names a New Schools Chancellor](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[Trump’s Tariffs Face GOP Pushback](#)

[Mayor Knew Of Transfer, Says Ex-DC Schools Chief](#)

[Israel’s “Dreamers” In Limbo](#)

[Abortion Bills Make Down Syndrome A Focus Of Fight](#)

[Populist Wins Tip Europe Into “Uncharted Territory”](#)

[Ex-Trump Aide Vows To Defy Mueller](#)

#### **Financial Times:**

[Italy On Course For Clash With EU As Voters Boost Populists Parties](#)

[US Offers UK Airlines Worse Deal After Brexit As Ownership Clouds Open Skies](#)

#### **Washington Times:**

[Obama Policies To End ‘Schoolhouse-To-Jailhouse Pipeline’ Helped Keep Nikolas Cruz Off Police Radar](#)

[Fear, Confusion Over Integrity Of U.S. Election Systems At All-Time High Ahead Of Midterms](#)

[Democrats Fielding — And Funding — Serious Challengers In GOP Strongholds](#)

[China’s Economic Lifeline For Greece Tangles Political Relations With EU](#)

[Judge Rules Trump’s DACA Phaseout Legal](#)

[Sam Nunberg, Ex-Trump Aide, Walks Back Refusal To Cooperate With Mueller Subpoena](#)

#### **Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:**

**ABC:** Russia Investigation-Nunberg; Nor’easter; Weather Forecast; Tariff Policy-Reactions; Trump-Gridiron Dinner; WV-Teachers Strike; Florida-Teacher Controversy; UK-Former Russian Spy Hospitalized; Oscars Award Stolen; SkyWest Mid-Flight Incident; NYC-Deadly Crash;

Brooklyn-Apartment Fire.

**CBS:** Russian Investigation-Nunberg; Tariff Policy-Reactions; SkyWest Mid-Flight Incident; Weather Forecast; UK-Former Russian Spy Hospitalized; WV-Teachers Strike; Syria Conflict; FTC-Scam Risk; Oscars Award Stolen.

**NBC:** Nor'easter; Weather Forecast; WV Teachers Strike; Russia Investigation-Nunberg; Washington-Avalanche Warning; UK-Former Russian Spy Hospitalized; Florida-Teacher Controversy; Hackers Target CPA Firms; China-Airport Roof Collapse; Oscars Award Stolen.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

Russia Investigation-Nunberg – 8 minutes, 45 seconds

Nor'easter/Weather Forecast – 7 minutes, 50 seconds

Tariff Policy – 4 minutes, 55 seconds

WV-Teachers – 4 minutes 15 seconds

Oscars Award Stolen – 4 minutes

UK-Former Russian Spy Hospitalized – 4 minutes

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Russia Investigation-Nunberg; Nor'easter; Florida-Gun Legislation; Oregon-Gun Sales Legislation.

**CBS:** Nor'easter; Florida-Gun Control Legislation; Russia Investigation-Nunberg; Tariff Policy-Reactions; Wall Street.

**FOX:** Florida-Gun Control Legislation; Florida School Shooting Investigation; WV-Teachers Strike; DC-DACA Protests; Tariff Policy-Trump; Senator Cochran Announces Retirement; Bill Cosby Case; Organ Donations Increase.

**NPR:** Tariff Policy-Trump; Senator Cochran Announces Retirement; UK-Former Russian Spy Hospitalized; Florida-Gun Control Legislation; Sherman Alexi-Sexual Harassment Allegations; Wall Street.

## **Washington Schedule**

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### **Today's Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — President Trump meets Swedish PM Lofven at the White House.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — No public schedule announced.

**US Senate:** 9:30 AM Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on worldwide threats – Hearing on 'Worldwide Threats', with testimony from Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats; and Defense Intelligence Agency Director Lt. Gen. Robert Ashley Jr. Location: Hart Senate Office Building, Rm 216, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Finance Committee hearing on protecting e-commerce consumers from counterfeits – Hearing on 'Protecting E-commerce Consumers from Counterfeits', with testimony from Government Accountability Office Director of International Affairs and Trade Kimberly Gianopoulos; Customs and Border Protection Office of Trade Executive Assistant Commissioner Brenda Smith; Consumer Product Safety Commission Office of Import Surveillance Director Jim Joholske; and UL Senior Vice President and Chief Commercial and Legal Officer Terrence Brady. Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 215, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

10:00 AM Nominations hearing considers Dr. James Reilly II to be U.S. Geological Survey Director. Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC [www.energy.senate.gov](http://www.energy.senate.gov).

2:00 PM House / Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets groups – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on 'Legislative Presentations of Multiple VSOs', with testimony from Paralyzed Veterans of America National President David Zurfluh; American Veterans National Commander Marion Polk; Vietnam Veterans of America National President John Rowan; American Ex-Prisoners of War National Commander Charles Susino Jr.; Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America Chief Policy Officer Melissa Bryant; Association of the United States Navy National Executive Director Rear Adm. (Ret.) Christopher Cole; Wounded Warrior Project Senior Vice President for Government and Community Relations Rene Bardorf; National Guard Association of the United States President Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Roy Robinson; and Non Commissioned Officers Association President and National Commander Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (Ret.) Vincent Patton III. Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

2:30 PM Senate Intelligence CLOSED hearing –  
<https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/closed-briefing-intelligence-matters-210>. Location: 219 Hart Senate Office Building.

2:30 PM Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs – Seapower Subcommittee hearing on 'Navy and Marine Corps Aviation Programs', with testimony from Naval Air Systems Commander Vice Adm. Paul Grosklags; U.S. Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Aviation Lt. Gen. Steven Rudder; and Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Director of Air Warfare (OPNAV N98) Rear Adm. Scott Conn. Location: Russell Senate Office Building, Rm 232A, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 10:00 AM Labor Secretary Acosta testifies to House Appropriations subcommittee on budget – Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee 'FY19 Budget Hearing – Department of Labor', with testimony from Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. Location: Rm 2358-C, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC  
<http://appropriations.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseAppropsGOP>

10:00 AM Treasury Secretary Mnuchin testifies to House Appropriations subcommittee on budget – Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee 'FY19 Budget Hearing – Department of Treasury', with testimony from Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2359, Washington, DC  
<http://appropriations.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseAppropsGOP>

10:00 AM House Natural Resources subcommittee oversight hearing on reducing the DOI maintenance backlog – Federal Lands Subcommittee oversight hearing on 'Exploring Innovative Solutions to Reduce the Department of the Interior's Maintenance Backlog.' Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC <http://naturalresources.house.gov>  
<https://twitter.com/NatResources>

10:00 AM House Armed Services Committee hearing on national security challenges and U.S. military activities in Africa – Hearing on 'National Security Challenges and U.S. Military Activities in Africa', with testimony from U.S. Africa Command Commander Gen. Thomas Waldhauser. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC  
[www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

10:00 AM House Small Business subcommittees joint hearing on rural broadband – Health and Technology Subcommittee and Agriculture, Energy, and Trade Subcommittee joint hearing on 'Disconnected: Rural Broadband and the Business Case for Small Carriers', with testimony from Womble Bond Dickinson associate Erin Fitzgerald (on behalf of Rural Wireless Association); Competitive Carriers Association Senior Vice President for Legislative Affairs Tim Donovan; Bloosurf co-founder Paul Carliner (on behalf of Blooston Rural Carriers); and Western Telecommunications Alliance Vice President of Government Affairs Derrick Owens. Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/>  
<https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

10:00 AM House Science subcommittee hearing on future of U.S. fusion energy research – Energy Subcommittee hearing on 'The Future of U.S. Fusion Energy Research', with testimony from ITER Organization Director-General Dr. Bernard Bigot; Department of Energy Office of Science Acting Associate Director of Fusion Energy Sciences Dr. James Van Dam; General Atomics Magnetic Fusion Energy Division Director of Advanced Fusion Systems Dr. Mickey Wade; and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory National Ignition Facility Director Dr. Mark Herrmann. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2318, Washington, DC  
<http://science.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HouseScience>

10:00 AM Interior, Energy, and Environment Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers'. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2154, Washington, DC  
<http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:00 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on the NTIA – Communications and Technology Subcommittee hearing on 'Oversight of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration', with testimony from Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information David Redl. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2123, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM House Workforce subcommittee hearing on 'Strengthening Welfare to Work With Child Care' – Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee hearing on 'Strengthening Welfare to Work With Child Care', with testimony from Alliance for Early Success Deputy Director Helene Stebbins; Louisiana Association of Business and Industry Director of Education and Workforce Development Brigitte Nieland; Campagna Center President and CEO Tammy Mann; and Mississippi Governor's Education and Workforce Development Policy Advisor Dr. Laurie Smith. Location: Rm 2175, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC

<http://edworkforce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/EdWorkforce>

10:00 AM House Financial Services Committee marks up its views and estimates letter – Markup hearing on ‘Views and Estimates of the Committee on Financial Services on Matters to be Set Forth in the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2019’. Location: Rm 2128, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

10:00 AM House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on class-action lawsuits against ICF/IID – Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice hearing on ‘Examining Class Action Lawsuits Against Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID)’, with testimony from parents Martha Bryant, Caroline Lahrmann, and Peter Kinzler; and Center for Public Representation Director of Advocacy Alison Barkoff. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2141, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseJudiciary>

10:00 AM Transportation Secretary Chao testifies to House committee on administration’s infrastructure proposal – Hearing on ‘Examining the Administration’s Infrastructure Proposal’, with testimony from Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2167, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

11:00 AM House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer regular pen-and-pad briefing. Location: H-144, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC [www.democraticwhip.gov/](http://www.democraticwhip.gov/) <https://twitter.com/WhipHoyer>

12:00 PM House debates Comprehensive Regulatory Review Act – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including ‘H.R. 4607 – Comprehensive Regulatory Review Act’, plus consideration of ‘H.R. 2226 – Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act’, as amended, ‘H.R. 4725 – Community Bank Reporting Relief Act’, ‘H.R. 4768 – National Strategy for Combating the Financing of Transnational Criminal Organizations Act’, as amended, ‘H.R. 4986 – RAY BAUM’S Act of 2018’, as amended, ‘H.R. 1132 – Political Appointee Burrowing Prevention Act’, as amended, ‘H.R. 4043 – Whistleblower Protection Extension Act of 2017’, as amended, ‘S. 188 – EGO Act’, as amended, and ‘H.R. 3737 – Social Media Use in Clearance Investigations Act of 2017’ under suspension of the rules. Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>. 10:00 a.m. for morning hour and 12:00 p.m. for legislative business

2:00 PM House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on U.S. Navy budget request for seapower and projection forces – Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee hearing on ‘Department of the Navy FY 2019 Budget Request for Seapower and Projection Forces’, with testimony from Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development & Acquisition James Geurts; Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfare Systems Vice Adm. William Merz; and Marine Corps Combat Development Command Commanding General Lt. Gen. Robert Walsh. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

2:00 PM House / Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets groups – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on ‘Legislative Presentations of Multiple VSOs’, with testimony from Paralyzed Veterans of America National President David Zurfluh; American Veterans National Commander Marion Polk; Vietnam Veterans of America National President John Rowan; American Ex-Prisoners of War National Commander Charles Susino Jr.; Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America Chief Policy Officer Melissa Bryant; Association of the United States Navy National Executive Director Rear Adm. (Ret.) Christopher Cole; Wounded Warrior Project Senior Vice President for Government and Community Relations Rene Bardorf; National Guard Association of the United States President Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Roy Robinson; and Non Commissioned Officers Association President and National Commander Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (Ret.) Vincent Patton III. Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

2:00 PM House Oversight subcommittee holds roundtable with Jerusalem mayor – House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform National Security Subcommittee holds roundtable with Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2247, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

3:30 PM EESI co-hosts briefing on ‘Building Climate Resilience in the Real Estate Sector’ – ‘Building Climate Resilience in the Real Estate Sector’ Citizens Climate Lobby / Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) briefing, on ‘the ways the public and private sectors can collaborate to develop the policy tools necessary to safeguard America’s buildings and homes from future natural disasters’. Congressional speakers and co-hosts are bipartisan Reps. Charlie Crist and Lee Zeldin, with panel featuring realtor and St. Petersburg, FL, Council Member Brandi Gabbard,

National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) Vice President Ryan Colker, and New Jersey Association of Floodplain Management Legislative Chair John Miller. Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-201, Washington, DC [www.eesi.org/](http://www.eesi.org/) [#eesitalk](https://twitter.com/eesionline)

3:30 PM House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on 'Marine Corps Readiness Posture' – Readiness Subcommittee hearing on 'Marine Corps Readiness Posture', with testimony from U.S. Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations Lt. Gen. Brian Beaudreault, and Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics Lt. Gen. Michael Dana; and Marine Forces Reserve Commander and Marine Forces North Commander Lt. Gen. Rex McMillian. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2212, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

**Other:** AIPAC Policy Conference concludes – American Israel Public Affairs Committee Policy Conference – 'preeminent annual gathering of the pro-Israel community' – concludes. Speakers during conference include Vice President Mike Pence, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Education Minister and Diaspora Affairs Minister Naftali Bennett, and Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Amb. Nikki Haley, USAID Administrator Mark Green, House Chief Deputy Majority Whip Patrick McHenry, Democratic Sen. Ben Cardin, bipartisan Reps. Anthony Brown, Ted Deutch, Eliot Engel, Jaime Herrera Beutler, Trent Kelly, Brian Mast, Seth Moulton, Stephanie Murphy, Jimmy Panetta, Robert Pittenger, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Ed Royce, Adam Schiff, Brad Sherman, Scott Taylor, and Lee Zeldin, Estonian Foreign Affairs Minister Sven Mikser, Albanian PM Edi Rama, Togolese Foreign Affairs Minister Robert Dussey, Chief Archivist of the United States David Ferriero, Arizona State Rep. Daniel Hernandez Jr., and Let America Vote founder Jason Kander. Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC [www.policyconference.org](http://www.policyconference.org) [#AIPAC2018](https://twitter.com/AIPAC)

9:00 AM 'Preventing Conflict to Create Pathways for Peace' U.N. and World Bank Group report launch at USIP – 'Preventing Conflict to Create Pathways for Peace' United Nations and World Bank Group report launch, hosted by the U.S. Institute of Peace. Report identifies 'significant policy lessons to drive future conflict operations and to help recognize opportunities for defense, diplomacy, and development to contribute to mutual success'. Speakers include United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, World Bank Fragility, Conflict & Violence Senior Director Franck Bousquet and Chief Technical Specialist Alexandre Marc, USAID Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Kate Somvongsiri, Somali Women and Human Rights Development Minister Deqa Yasin, U.N./WB Partnership on Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations Advisor Jago Salmon, and USIP President Nancy Lindborg. Location: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2301 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org) <https://twitter.com/USIP>

10:00 AM VA Secretary Shulkin and AMVETS leaders announce new vet health care plan – Department of Veterans Affairs and American Veterans senior leadership hold press conference to present 'a bold new plan that will address gaps in veteran mental healthcare, the responsible expansion of VA care in the community, improving the VA polytrauma/traumatic brain injury system of care, implementation of President Donald Trump's executive order, and drastically reducing veteran suicide in the U.S.'. Secretary of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin, Veterans Health Administration Executive in Charge Carolyn Clancy, and AMVETS National Commander Marion Polk, National Executive Director Joseph Chenelly, and Chief Medical Executive Lana McKenzie speak. Location: National Press Club, 529 14th St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.va.gov/> <https://twitter.com/DeptVetAffairs>.

12:30 PM USIP discussion on 'Black Leadership in Advancing International Peace and Security' – 'Black Leadership in Advancing International Peace and Security' U.S. Institute of Peace discussion on how African Americans have impacted the fields of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, featuring former U.S. Ambassador to Liberia, South Africa, the United Nations, and Australia Amb. Edward Perkins and former U.S. Ambassador to Liberia Amb. Linda Thomas-Greenfield. Location: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2301 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org) <https://twitter.com/USIP>

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## Last Laughs

### Late Night Political Humor.

**Stephen Colbert:** "Robert Mueller issued a subpoena to [former Trump aide Sam] Nunberg to get him to testify about the Russia investigation and not only did Nunberg say he won't show up, he said 'he was planning to go on Bloomberg TV and tear up the subpoena.' No, no, no, no – smart thinking. Do it on Bloomberg. No witnesses!"

**Stephen Colbert:** "But that was just the beginning. Nunberg took over cable news like a car chase. He was on MSNBC at 2:45, CNN at 3:30, CNN again at 4:00. I believe at 5:00 he called into HGTV to incriminate himself on 'Flip or Flop'. I'm pretty sure, after Mueller gets through with him, it's going to be flip."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "Last night's Oscars broadcast was over three-and-a-half hours long. Wow. To put that in perspective, that's longer than most jobs last in the White House."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "The news out of Washington, I read that President Trump is on a diet and has been trying to eat more salad. When he first ordered one at the White House, the kitchen was excited because they thought the Obamas were back."

**Seth Meyers:** "According to the New York Times,...China's President Xi Jinping is now President for life. President Trump jokingly told donors this weekend, 'Maybe we'll give that a shot someday.' That's great, but first, why not try being President for a full week?"

**Seth Meyers:** "According to sources, White House Chief of Staff John Kelly is frustrated with Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, and questions what they do during the day. I'm going to say nothing and homework?"

**Seth Meyers:** "President Trump said today that he's not backing down on his decision to impose tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, adding that the US has been ripped off by virtually every country in the world. For example, Wakanda. Turns out they've been hoarding vibranium for years."

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Susan Combs  
 Fed Rooms/managed Government

Page Number : 1 Invoice Nbr : 172148  
 Guest Number : 1390765  
 Folio ID : A  
 Arrive Date : 27-FEB-18 17:37  
 Depart Date : 05-MAR-18 05:26  
 No. Of Guest : 1  
 Room Number : 320  
 Club Account :  
 Voucher Number : 484R7B

Tax Invoice

Tax ID :

Sheraton Anchorage MAR-05-2018 05:30 PAULINE

| Date      | Reference | Description  | Charges/Credits (USD) |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 27-FEB-18 | RT320     | Room Revenue | 108.56                |
| 28-FEB-18 | RT320     | Room Revenue | 108.56                |
| 01-MAR-18 | RT320     | Room Revenue | 108.56                |
| 02-MAR-18 | RT320     | Room Revenue | 108.56                |
| 03-MAR-18 | RT320     | Room Revenue | 108.56                |
| 04-MAR-18 | RT320     | Room Revenue | 108.56                |
| 05-MAR-18 | (b) (6)   |              | -651.36               |

\*\*\*For Authorization Purpose Only\*\*\*

(b) (6)

|           |        |            |
|-----------|--------|------------|
| Date      | Code   | Authorized |
| 05-MAR-18 | 046643 | 651.36     |

|                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| ** Total Charges | 651.36  |
| ** Total Credits | -651.36 |
| *** Balance      | -0.00   |

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| Page Number    | : | 2         | Invoice Nbr | : | 172148 |
| Guest Number   | : | 1390765   |             |   |        |
| Folio ID       | : | A         |             |   |        |
| Arrive Date    | : | 27-FEB-18 | 17:37       |   |        |
| Depart Date    | : | 05-MAR-18 | 05:26       |   |        |
| No. Of Guest   | : | 1         |             |   |        |
| Room Number    | : | 320       |             |   |        |
| Club Account   | : |           |             |   |        |
| Voucher Number | : | 484R7B    |             |   |        |

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**Attachments:** [invite.ics](#)

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## American Farm Bureau

[more details »](#)

**When** Wed Mar 7, 2018 11am – 12pm Eastern Time

**Where** Conference 6023 ([map](#))

**Video call** (b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar** susan\_combs@ios.doi.gov

**Who**

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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## DOI In The News

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### Interior Spending \$139K To Fix Doors In Sec. Zinke's Office.

The [AP](#) (3/8, Biesecker) reports that the Interior Department is "spending nearly \$139,000 to upgrade three sets of double doors in the office of Secretary Ryan Zinke." According to spokeswoman Heather Swift, "Zinke was not aware of the contract for the work prior to a request about it from The Associated Press." The work was "planned by career facilities and security officials as part of the decade-long modernization of the historic building erected in 1936 a few blocks from the White House, she said." Swift said Thursday in an emailed statement, "The secretary was not aware of this contract but agrees that this is a lot of money for demo, install, materials and labor. Between regulations that require historic preservation and outdated government procurement rules, the costs for everything from pencils to printing to doors is astronomical. This is a perfect example of why the secretary believes we need to reform procurement processes."

[CNN](#) (3/8, Ganim, Wallace, Tatum) reports that "the new doors will be made of fiberglass." The article adds that "the previous sets of doors have been damaged for years, according to an Interior official, to the point where wind and water come into the office during inclement weather, which in turn damaged the historic hardwood floors." According to the official, "damage has caused bottom panels to fall out and be 'replaced with cardboard and duct tape.'"

[The Hill](#) (3/8, Carter) reports that the Sierra Club "issued a statement Thursday slamming Zinke over the report, calling him a 'walking scandal.'" Sierra Club president Ethan Manuel said in the statement, "Now we know that Ryan Zinke isn't using just any door when he shuts the American people out. Like Scott Pruitt, Zinke is a walking scandal who believes he can live the life of luxury on the American taxpayer's dime, and it's time Trump puts a stop to it. We only hope that this \$139,000 door doesn't hit Zinke on his way out."

Additional coverage was provided by [Politico](#) (3/8, Adragna), [ABC News](#) (3/8, Ebbs), [Fox News](#) (3/8), [Reuters](#) (3/9, Staff), the [Huffington Post](#) (3/8, D'Angelo), [MarketWatch](#) (3/8, Murphy), [New Republic](#) (3/8, Atkin), [WJBD-AM Salem \(IL\)](#) Salem, IL (3/8), [KIVI-TV Boise \(ID\)](#) Boise, ID (3/8, Jones, Ware), and [KSJR-FM Collegeville \(MN\)](#) Collegeville, MN (3/8).

### Trump Official Says Interior Aims To Move 'Pretty Quickly' On Arctic Refuge Oil Development.

[KTOO-FM](#) Juneau, AK (3/8, Harball) reports that Interior Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt and Assistant Secretary Joe Balash spoke at an industry gathering in Anchorage "after spending several days in North Slope communities." Bernhardt "said the Trump Administration is working to speed along the process leading to oil development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." He "said in the next few weeks the Interior Department will kick off the regulatory process required before it can hold an oil lease sale in the refuge."

*ANWR Development Protesters Gather As Interior Department Officials Visit Fairbanks.* The [Fairbanks \(AK\) News-Miner](#) (3/8, Granger) reports that "a group of more than 50 protesters gathered in front of the Noel Wien Public Library Tuesday afternoon to speak out against the continued movement to develop the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil." The rally was held shortly "after members of the activist group Defend the Sacred learned that Department of Interior officials Deputy Interior Secretary David Bernhardt and Assistant

Secretary of the Interior Joe Balash would be visiting Fairbanks to speak with local DOI employees about lease sales in ANWR." Jessica Girard, a spokesperson for Defend the Sacred, said, "There have been really not a lot of notifications from the Department of Interior about their arrival in Alaska. It seems that there will be a big announcement this week about the ANWR and so we're going to stand in solidarity with the Gwich'in people who were not informed of these meetings at all to show that we do not agree with this development and or the expeditious nature of working to get leasing sales before 2020."

The [Fairbanks \(AK\) News-Miner](#) (3/8, Granger) reports that the Interior Department "disputes the claims made by protesters that a Fairbanks meeting between department leaders and employees was a secret meeting about plans to proceed with opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling." Steve Wackowski, senior Interior Department adviser for Alaska Affairs, said, "It wasn't some secret ANWR planning meeting with employees. The topic was 'Meet your department secretary and ask him questions.' We had National Park Service, Office of Aviation Management; folks who had nothing to do with ANWR were in that meeting."

### **Religious Leaders Call On Trump Administration To Stop Offshore Drilling Plans.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/8, Justice) reports that "hundreds of religious leaders penned a letter Thursday to President Trump and Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke asking them to end plans to expand offshore drilling and seismic testing in public waters citing 'unacceptable risks to God's oceans and coastal communities.'" The group, part of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, "voiced their opposition to the administration's offshore drilling plans due to environmental safety concerns." The letter stated, "God created the oceans with an abundance of life and, as stewards of God's earth, we should work to preserve and protect God's marine creation. As people of faith, we also uphold our duty to love our neighbors. Oceans provide food sources and livelihoods for millions in the U.S. and globally." They "instead proposed the administration focus on renewable sources of energy such as wind and solar and to work on maximizing energy efficiency."

### **Congresswoman Herrera Beutler Asks Interior To Analyze Murrelet Strategy.**

The [Wahkiakum County \(WA\) Eagle](#) (3/8) reports that Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler in a letter last week urged Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "to make sure the habitat conservation plan (HCP) for marbled murrelets is based on science and not politically motivated." According to Herrera Beutler, "under the bird's long term conservation strategy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is requiring rural counties like Pacific and Wahkiakum to set aside state-managed trust timber land from possible harvests to protect the species, thereby jeopardizing the counties' ability to harvest timber and generate revenue to provide basic services to their residents." In her letter, she wrote, "Secretary Zinke, I am asking you to step in on behalf of these counties and to work toward a conservation solution for the marbled murrelet that is both just and scientifically sound. The voice of our rural residents has been drowned out by those who attack their way of life, but I'll continue to speak on their behalf. I hope you will join me."

### **Sweeney Interior Nomination In Limbo.**

The [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (3/8, Ruskin) reports the nomination of Tara Sweeney, President Trump's choice to be the next assistant Interior secretary for Indian Affairs, "has been held up for months at the Office of Government Ethics." Sweeney is an executive vice president of Arctic Slope Regional Corp and "also one of the 13,000 shareholders in ASRC." Sen. Lisa Murkowski "says that stock seems to have stumped the government ethics office." According to the article, "normally, if nominees hold stock in an industry regulated by the agency where they're hoping to serve, they can resolve that potential conflict by selling the stock." But "Murkowski says that's not appropriate for shareholders of Alaska Native Corporations, whose stock is issued to eligible Native residents or inherited." Murkowski said, "No Native person should be asked to sell off, or give up their birthright in order to serve in the administration."

### **Another Trump Administration Official Has An Ethics Problem.**

The [Huffington Post](#) (3/8, D'Angelo) reports that "a political appointee at the Interior Department attended two private events hosted by her longtime former employer, the right wing Heritage Foundation, which appears to be a violation of federal ethics rules." Lori Mashburn worked as an associate director for the Heritage Foundation from October 2011 to January 2017, according to her financial disclosure form. In May 2017 she was hired as the Interior Department's White



House liaison. On Sept. 29, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "gave a speech at Heritage" and "Zinke's personal calendar shows that Mashburn was among several Interior Department officials in attendance at the event." According to the article, "a detailed schedule the department released as part of a public records request shows that after the public event, Mashburn joined Zinke and other agency officials for a private luncheon with several high-ranking Heritage Foundation employees." The article notes that "Mashburn also joined Zinke at a private Heritage affair on Oct. 16 at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, a government building that primarily houses White House staff."

### **This Is No Reality Show: Federal Employees Reassigned In The Politically Charged Trump Era.**

[KUER-FM](#) Salt Lake City (3/8, Fahys) reports that "Matthew Allen used to lead the communications team at the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's Washington headquarters," but he was demoted "two days after another embarrassing leak from the Interior Department." The Washington Post had "published a map that showed drastic cuts that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke was proposing for the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments in southern Utah." Allen "suspects he lost his job because of that leak." He said in an interview, "My belief is that they suspected me of leaking a series of sensitive documents to the press. They're trying to make an example of this is what happens when you can't be trusted or when you're not 'loyal to the flag,' as the secretary likes to say." Allen was moved to the Bureau of Environmental Safety and Enforcement. He said, "I'm making approximately \$160,000 a year, with nobody to supervise, with no clear job duties or responsibilities. That doesn't feel like a good use of taxpayer dollars."

### **GAO Calls For Better Scrutiny Of Heavy Equipment Purchases.**

[FEDweek](#) (3/8) reports that "federal agencies spend some \$7.4 billion a year to purchase heavy equipment but are not fully considering whether some of that could have been leased instead, GAO has said." GAO "looked in-depth at the Air Force, Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service, which together spent about \$360 million in purchases over 2012-2016, compared with only \$5 million in lease expenses over that time." It found that officials "did not consistently conduct or document lease-versus-purchase analyses." Interior "concurred with recommendations that they should clarify the circumstances in which lease-versus-purchases analyses for heavy equipment acquisitions are to be conducted and documented."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Legislation Would Promote Stronger Tribal Self-Governance.**

The [Minot \(ND\) Daily News](#) (3/9) reports that Sens. John Hoeven and Tom Udall, chairman and vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, respectively, "on Wednesday introduced bipartisan legislation to improve the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act and promote stronger tribal self-governance." The Practical Reforms and Other Goals to Reinforce the Effectiveness of Self-Governance and Self-Determination (PROGRESS) for Indian Tribes Act "would streamline the Department of the Interior's self-governance process and provide Indian tribes with greater flexibility to efficiently tailor, consolidate and administer federal programs for their communities."

### **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Submits Fourth Land Into Trust Application To Restore Full Reservation Status.**

[Potsdam \(NY\) North Country Now](#) (3/8) reports that "the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe recently submitted its fourth Land into Trust application with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs." The application, "which would restore full reservation status and tribal authority over lands illegally taken by the State of New York, is part of a comprehensive plan surrounding settlement of the tribe's decades-old land claim case." The tribe has "filed four applications for a total of six parcels."

### **Cop's Death Prompts Debate Over Justice On Tribal Lands.**

The [Taos \(NM\) News](#) (3/8, Oxford) reports that federal prosecutors seek "the death penalty for Kirby Cleveland, a Navajo man accused of killing a tribal police officer in 2017." The case could "signal that U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions will take a more aggressive approach with the

death penalty in Indian Country, though most tribes, including the Navajo Nation, are opposed to capital punishment." According to the article, "regardless of how it plays out, Cleveland's case is likely to revive a debate on race, sovereignty and just who can deliver justice on reservations across New Mexico – and the country."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Sen. Cory Gardner, Rep. Scott Tipton Push Bills To Move BLM Headquarters Out West.**

The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (3/8, Eversden) reports that Sen. Cory Gardner and Rep. Scott Tipton are "ramping up their calls to move the Bureau of Land Management headquarters from Washington, D.C., to the West." The legislators have "introduced similar legislation in the House and Senate, called the Bureau of Land Management Headquarters Relocation Act, which directs the Department of Interior to create a strategy." Gardner said in an interview Thursday, "I spoke to Secretary Zinke (Wednesday) again about the idea and I said, 'Hey, you got to move this. I think that they are looking very favorably with the reorganization moving (BLM) to the West.'"

### **Bundy Leader Of Standoffs Says He'll Run For Nevada Governor.**

The [AP](#) (3/8) reports, "A leader of two high-profile armed standoffs with US agents whose Bundy ranching family has decried federal ownership of public land says he'll mount an independent" bid to succeed term-limited Gov. Brian Sandoval (R-NV) this fall. Ryan Bundy "said Thursday that he doesn't think other candidates" in the race "would properly protect states' rights. The 45-year-old son of Cliven Bundy says he intends to file candidacy papers next Wednesday in Las Vegas and embark on a statewide speaking tour."

The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (3/8, DeHaven) reports that Bundy's bid "would count as an unwelcome development for Republicans, since" he "will likely siphon off general election votes that might've otherwise gone to the" GOP nominee. The Bundys "rose to prominence in 2014, amid a" standoff "with federal agents at the family's Southern Nevada ranch" over "a decades-old dispute over unpaid federal grazing fees on the Bundy's Southern Nevada ranch." Over "a dozen participants [were] arrested and indicted on federal felony charges. The case against the Bundys was dismissed...in January. Ryan Bundy added to his national profile in January 2016, when he helped lead another well-armed clash with federal authorities at the seized headquarters of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, near Burns, Ore."

## **Bureau Of Reclamation**

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### **Full Water Supply Expected According To First Bureau Of Reclamation Forecast.**

The [Yakima \(WA\) Herald-Republic](#) (3/8, Hoang) reports that "there should be full water supply for both junior and senior water rights holders this year, according to the Bureau of Reclamation's monthly water supply forecast released Thursday." According to the article, "temperatures are expected to be around normal and precipitation is expected to be at above average levels in the coming months, which should contribute to full water supply for water rights holders." Chris Lynch, hydrologist with the Bureau of Reclamation, said, "Everything is looking good."

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Elephant Trophy Decision Faces Pushback From Some Trump Allies.**

[The Hill](#) (3/8, Green) reports that the Trump Administration's "decision to reverse course on an Obama-era ban on African elephant trophy imports is facing pushback from some allies of President Trump." According to the article, "while hunting advocacy groups and members of Congress who back them are cheering the decision from the Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to allow imports on a case-by-case basis, others are knocking the move." The article notes that "two conservative media hosts who pushed Trump in November to put a pause on a decision to overturn an established trophy import ban are among those urging him to hold up the Obama-era order." Fox News host Laura Ingraham "tweeted a plea to Trump on Wednesday asking him to change the new policy and warning him what could happen to supporters if he did not." Also, conservative radio host Michael Savage has "spoken out against the FWS policy this week, writing in a blog post Wednesday that he 'felt betrayed' by the

administration's secret decision after having previously spoken in person with Trump on the issue."

[E&E Publishing](#) (3/8, Doyle) reports that if "Trump has spent his last round on an issue that threatened to alienate his allies in the hunting and gun-rights communities, the next steps will unfold more quietly." The article notes that "the Fish and Wildlife Service's March 1 memo explaining the new case-by-case policy was filed with U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., where a federal judge under the dictates of a Dec. 22, 2017, appellate court ruling will be sending a follow-up order to the agency." Greg Sheehan, principal deputy director of FWS, said in an email, "We are awaiting the District Court's remand back to the Service before implementing this approach."

***Google, Facebook Join Global Fight To Stop Online Wildlife Trafficking.*** [ABC News](#) (3/8, Allen) reports that "Google and Facebook joined more than a dozen major tech firms in the fight against illegal trophy hunting, part of a larger effort aimed at stopping poachers from selling banned products like ivory, rhino horns and tiger cubs online." The World Wildlife Fund said in a statement Wednesday, "Advances in technology and connectivity across the world, combined with rising buying power and demand for illegal wildlife products, have increased the ease of exchange from poacher to consumer. As a result, an unregulated online market allows criminals to sell illegally obtained wildlife products across the globe. Purchasing elephant ivory, tiger cubs, and pangolin scales is as easy as click, pay, ship." Twenty-one tech firm "from around the globe, including eBay and Microsoft, have agreed to join the WWF's new Global Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online, according to the fund, which said it plans to reduce wildlife trafficking 80 percent by 2020."

#### **Lawsuit Filed After US Fails To List Walruses As Threatened.**

The [AP](#) (3/8, Joling) reports that an environmental group sued the Trump Administration Thursday over its failure to list Pacific walruses "as threatened because of diminished sea ice – their primary habitat – brought on by climate warming." In October, "facing a court-ordered deadline for a final decision," the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "said it could not conclude with certainty that walruses would be affected by ice loss because they have shown an ability to forage from shoreline resting areas." Emily Jeffers, an attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity, said, "We're confident the court will see this reckless finding as a politically driven decision that completely ignores the agency's legal obligations to protect imperiled wildlife."

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (3/8, Cama) and [Courthouse News](#) (3/8, LOUIS).

#### **Wildlife Groups Sue US Agency Over Carnivore Killing Plan.**

[Courthouse News](#) (3/8, Pampuro) reports that "environmental groups are calling out the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for agreeing to fund a state's carnivore kill experiment." Last December, the FWS "agreed to fund 75 percent of a multi-million dollar project proposed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife aimed to boost local mule deer populations, but according to a petition filed in the state Supreme Court Wednesday, the agency failed to adequately analyze the project's environmental impact." The petition asks the court to "give the public a more meaningful opportunity to analyze the environmental effects of and submit comments."

#### **Streaked Horned Lark Lawsuit Targets Oregon Farm Exemptions.**

The [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (3/8, Perkowski) reports that "exemptions for common farming practices in Oregon's Willamette Valley are targeted in an environmentalist lawsuit over federal protections for the threatened streaked horned lark." An environmental organization is "challenging the federal government's decision to exempt common farm activities from the prohibition against 'taking' streaked horned larks." According to the lawsuit by the Center for Biological Diversity, "the government failed to explain why the exemption would help conserve the species when its population had declined while these "routine" activities were occurring."

#### **Whooping Cranes In Florida May Have New Home In Louisiana.**

[KATC-TV](#) Lafayette, LA (3/8) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service' Whooping Crane Recovery Team is "proposing to move 14 whooping cranes that live at Kissimmee Prairie in central Florida to a larger and more robust population of cranes in Vermilion Parish." The [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (3/8, Behrendt, Pittman) reports that according to the FWS, the Kissimmee whoopers have "experienced a high rate of mortality and low reproductive success related to habitat conditions, predation, and power line strikes." The article adds that "unless they're moved

to join a flock in Louisiana that now numbers about 60, experts say those Florida cranes would likely just die out."

### **California Salmon Will Have Places To Chill With Dam Removal.**

The [AP](#) (3/8, Knickmeyer) reports that "a \$100 million project removing dams and helping fish route around others is returning a badly endangered salmon to spring-fed waters in northernmost California, giving cold-loving native fish a life-saving place to chill as scientists say climate change, drought and human diversions warm the waters." State and federal officials, "in a years-long project with dam-owner Pacific Gas & Electric Co., plan to release 200,000 young, endangered winter-run Chinook salmon over the next two months into the north fork of Battle Creek, where melted snow percolating through volcanic rock provides ideal habitat for native salmon and steelhead that thrive in cold mountain water."

Additional coverage was provided by the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (3/9, Fimrite) and the [Chico \(CA\) Enterprise-Record](#) (3/8, Schoonover).

## **National Park Service**

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### **Tubman National Park In Auburn: Parties Near Agreement On Managing South Street Site.**

The [Auburn \(NY\) Citizen](#) (3/8, Harding) reports that "Harriet Tubman Home, Inc., and the National Park Service are close to finalizing an agreement that will detail how the entities will manage the main sites associated with the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn." Frank Barrows, superintendent of Fort Stanwix National Monument in Rome and project lead for the Tubman park, "said Wednesday that the implementation agreement is under National Park Service internal legal reviews." An executed agreement is expected by Sept. 30.

### **Bighorn Canyon Eyes Free Admission.**

The [Powell \(WY\) Tribune](#) (3/8, Davis) reports that Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area "may soon be more, or less, affordable to visit." According to the article, "a recent cost benefit analysis shows the National Park Service property actually spends about three times more on expenses and labor to collect fees than they bring in." Park officials have "sent a fee adjustment request to the regional office." Christy Fleming, chief of interpretation for the park, said, "We're not sure where it stands right now. By summer, we may not have a fee program. However, if the Washington office denies [the proposal] and says we need to continue to collect fees, it could go up. We would have to do \$15 per day."

### **NPS Finishes 2nd Year Of Asphalt Removal Effort At Gulf Islands National Seashore.**

The [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (3/8, Gabriel) reports that the National Park Service "this month completed the second year of its five-year project to clean weathered asphalt from miles of beach stretching from Navarre in the east to Perdido Key in the west" at Gulf Islands National Seashore. The project is "being funded through \$10.85 million in restitution money paid by oil giant BP in the aftermath of the 2010 Gulf Coast oil spill." According to Kelly Irick, the park service biologist overseeing the project, "using mechanical sifters and handheld rakes, a crew of about 40 workers cleaned about 200 acres of Gulf Islands National Seashore's Santa Rosa Area from September through the end of February."

### **Grand Teton Rangers Halt Aging Bodycam Program.**

The [AP](#) (3/8) reports that "Grand Teton National Park officials say rangers have stopped recording interactions on body cameras and dashcams, citing an aging and costly camera system." The program has "been in operation at the western Wyoming park for over a decade, but it was suspended indefinitely in January while officials search for an alternative." Chief Ranger Michael Nash "says the park's camera system was becoming outdated with body cameras breaking and batteries losing charge." Park public affairs officer Denise Germann "says storage for the camera footage was also an issue, and downloading that footage was time-consuming for rangers."

### **Invasive Species Worries Leads Yellowstone To Ban Felt Soles.**

The [AP](#) (3/8) reports that "concerns over aquatic invasive species have led Yellowstone National Park officials to ban the use of felt sole boots or waders and to set a boating season during which watercraft inspections will be available." Park officials "say rubber sole boots will be allowed because they trap fewer organisms and can be cleaned with water and a scrub brush." The

boating season will run from May 26 through Nov. 4.

### **National Park In Virginia Remains Closed After Wind Damage.**

The [AP](#) (3/9) reports that Prince William Forest Park “remains closed a week after heavy winds damaged hundreds of trees and created dangerous conditions there.” According to the article, “crews have cleared more than 600 fallen and hazardous trees...following last week’s wind storm.” Officials expect the park “to remain closed for another two or three weeks.”

### **Comments Open On Lassen Park’s Bumpass Hell Access Alternatives.**

The [Oroville \(CA\) Mercury-Register](#) (3/8, Schoonover) reports that “three alternatives have been developed to revamp access to Bumpass Hell in Lassen Volcanic National Park, and a 30-day comment period has opened on the environmental assessment of the three options.” The preferred option will “maintain the current boardwalk configuration in the basin, and make improvements to the trail from the main park road.”

### **Yellowstone Fee Proposal Passes Wyoming Legislature.**

The [AP](#) (3/8) reports that “the Wyoming Legislature has passed a proposal to collect a fee at Yellowstone National Park to fund wildlife conservation efforts in the states surrounding the park.” The measure, “which also involves neighboring Grand Teton National Park, was approved Thursday and now goes to Gov. Matt Mead for his consideration.” The article notes that “since only the federal government can impose fees in national parks, the resolution seeks to start a conversation between the three states and federal officials.”

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **The USGS Director’s Newest Job Description: Maintaining ‘Scientific Integrity’.**

The [Pacific Standard](#) (3/8, Diep) reports that “during Tuesday’s confirmation hearing with the Committee on Energy & Natural Resources for James Reilly, President Donald Trump’s nominee for USGS director, congresspeople emphasized that Reilly would have to protect the scientists in his agency and maintain a sort of firewall between their scientific work and any political agendas.” Sen. Lisa Murkowski, the committee chair, said, “My hope, my ask, is that you maintain that integrity within the agency.” The article notes that “the new emphasis on safeguarding science also comes after a series of Trump nominees who have worried advocates because of their conflicts of interest.”

### **Trump Plan Ends Research On Uranium Mining Near Grand Canyon.**

The [AP](#) (3/8, Fonseca) reports that “U.S. scientists studying the effects of uranium mining around the Grand Canyon say they are lacking information on whether the radioactive element is hurting plants, animals and a water source for more than 30 million people.” Moreover, “they would not get to fully gather it if President Donald Trump’s 2019 budget proposal is approved.” The U.S. Geological Survey is “leading a 15-year study meant to determine whether a 1 million-acre area surrounding the national park needs protection from new uranium mining claims well into the future.” The USGS “says it’s received far less for its study than what’s needed so far and would be left with nothing under Trump’s plan, which eliminates the money in favor of other priorities.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Lake Pontchartrain Basin Being Monitored For Spillway Environmental Effects.* [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (3/8, Schleifstein).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Commentary: One Of Trump’s Biggest Scandals Is Happening In Utah.**

In an op-ed for the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (3/8, Erickson), Peter Erickson, a senior scientist in the Seattle office of the Stockholm Environment Institute, writes that a new study in the research journal *Climatic Change* “shows the scale of how public lands are still used to worsen the climate catastrophe.” Researchers “found that about one-quarter of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions arise from burning fossil fuels pulled from public soil.” But more importantly, Erickson writes, “we found that these fossil fuels aren’t needed.” According to Erickson, “were the federal government



to stop issuing new leases, whether at Bureau of Land Management offices in the west or Bureau of Ocean Energy Management offices in Washington, federal fossil fuel production – and emissions thereof – would gradually decline, lessening our culpability for climate change, and aiding the transition to plentiful, renewable energy.”

### **Editorial: Game Changer On Trophy Hunting.**

In an editorial, the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (3/9) criticizes the move by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to lift restrictions “on big-game trophies from several African countries.” According to the paper, “while supporters of big-game hunting argue that the substantial fees paid by hunters help fund conservation of vulnerable species such as African elephants, the overturned prohibitions targeted countries where the fees hadn’t been shown to consistently further protection of animals.”

### **BLM Bigwigs Need To Move Out West.**

In an editorial, the [Ontario \(OR\) Argus Observer](#) (3/8) supports moving the headquarters for the Bureau of Land Management to the West. The paper says “the logic of this idea isn’t hard for people in the West to understand.” That is, the BLM’s “decisions impact the livelihoods of people who populate rural communities, but those decisions are made far from the forests, grasslands and high deserts they call home.”

### **Additional Reading.**

- *Should The US Ban Hunters From Importing Elephant Trophies?*. [NJ News](#) (3/8) .
- *Mining Reform America And Arizona Need Would Protect The Environment*. [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (3/8, Krill).
- *Drill, Donnie, Drill!* [San Luis Obispo \(CA\) New Times](#) (3/8).
- *US Doesn’t Need Orange County’s Coast To Achieve Energy Independence*. [Orange County \(CA\) Register](#) (3/8, Dunn, Brown).
- *FOIA Requests Will Be Fewer If Information Is More Accessible*. [St. George \(UT\) Spectrum](#) (3/8).

## **Top National News**

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### **Trump Hails “Great Progress” With North Korea, Will Hold Talks With Kim.**

Media reports of Thursday’s announcement of talks between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un hail the development as historic, noting that no US president has ever met with a North Korean leader. A number of media analyses are crediting the President for bringing about a significant diplomatic accomplishment. Under the headline “Trump’s Bellicosity Secures A Diplomatic Coup – For Now,” for example, the [Washington Post](#) (3/8, A1, DeYoung) reports on its front page that “for the moment, at least, it appears to be a clear-cut victory – the biggest foreign policy win of his young administration. ... Even pessimists acknowledged that Trump’s hard line against Pyongyang, after decades of less forceful US effort, played a significant role in moving one of the world’s most vexing and threatening problems in a potentially positive direction.”

The [New York Times](#) (3/8, Landler) says the President “expressed his optimism about the meeting,” [tweeting](#) Thursday evening, “Kim Jong Un talked about denuclearization with the South Korean Representatives, not just a freeze. Also, no missile testing by North Korea during this period of time. Great progress being made but sanctions will remain until an agreement is reached. Meeting being planned!” The Times says that for Trump, a meeting with Kim “is a breathtaking gamble,” but both leaders “share a penchant for bold, dramatic moves, and their personal participation in a negotiation could take it in unexpected directions.”

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/8, Westwood, Correll) reports that a “senior Administration official” pointed to “North Korea’s ‘commitment to denuclearize’ and the regime’s promise to stop testing weapons as reasons why Trump decided to accept Kim’s invitation.”

Sean Hannity said on [Fox News’ Hannity](#) (3/8), “President Trump scoring big win and possibly averting a major global nuclear crisis tonight with North Korea.” To [Politico](#) (3/8, Bender, Toosi, Cook), the talks “could be the biggest breakthrough in the tense nuclear saber-rattling that has defined the president’s stance since taking office,” while [Axios](#) (3/8, Britzky) says it is a “stunning announcement...given just a few months ago the leaders were exchanging threats of nuclear destruction.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/8, Bennett) calls it “an extraordinary invitation,”

and says "any face-to-face meeting, if it takes place, would be historic." [Reuters](#) (3/7, Mason, Spetalnick) says the possibility of talks between the two leaders "a potentially dramatic breakthrough in the North Korea nuclear standoff," and according to [Bloomberg News](#) (3/8, Olorunnipa, Kong), Trump's "decision to meet soon with Kim is supported by his Vice President Mike Pence."

In what [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/8, story 2, 0:40, Muir) called "something very rare," President Trump went into the White House briefing room Thursday evening and told reporters "cryptically" that an importation announcement on North Korea would be made soon. The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/8, story 3, 0:40, Glor) likewise said the President "surprised a lot of folks by popping into the briefing room." [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/8, lead story, 2:35, Welker) also reported on the President's appearance in the briefing room.

Shortly afterwards, [USA Today](#) (3/8, Korte, Jackson) reports, South Korean national security adviser Chung Eui-yong told reporters outside the White House Trump will meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for nuclear talks "by May." A South Korean delegation led by Chung was in Washington on Thursday to brief Administration officials on their talks earlier this week with Kim. Chung told reporters, "I explained to President Trump that his leadership, and his maximum pressure policy, along with international solidarity, brought us to this juncture."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/8, Fifield) reports White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said in a statement, "President Trump greatly appreciates the nice words of the South Korean delegation and President Moon. He will accept the invitation to meet with Kim Jong Un at a place and time to be determined." Chung, the Post notes, "credited Trump for bringing the North Korean leader to the table, continuing Seoul's deliberate efforts to flatter the American president."

Chung, the [AP](#) (3/9, Pennington) reports, said he had told Trump that Kim says he is committed to "denuclearization" and "has pledged that North Korea will refrain from any further nuclear or missile tests – providing a rare diplomatic opening after a year of escalating tensions over the North's tests." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/8, A1, Gordon, Cheng) notes Kim made a similar pledge to South Korean President Moon Jae-in last week.

The [Washington Times](#) (3/8, Boyer) reports the delegation led by Chung briefed Trump in the Oval Office Thursday on their talks this week with Kim, along with National Security Adviser McMaster, Defense Secretary Mattis, Chief of Staff Kelly and "other US officials."

**State Dept. Scrambling To Assemble Team For Talks.** The [Washington Post](#) (3/8, Sonne, Hudson) says Trump's "high-wire gambit to accept a meeting with...Kim Jong Un sets off a scramble among US officials to assemble a team capable of supporting a historic summit of longtime adversaries and determine a viable engagement strategy." State Department officials, including Secretary of State Tillerson, were "playing down the immediacy of talks in the hours before" the "surprise announcement." The Post says the "apparent lack of coordination marked a pattern of mixed messaging that has characterized the Trump administration's North Korea diplomacy."

[Bloomberg Politics](#) (3/8, Wadhams) too says Tillerson "played down hopes for a breakthrough on North Korea's nuclear program," saying the US is a "long way" from negotiations with Pyongyang. Speaking to reporters in Addis Ababa, Tillerson said, "We're a long way from negotiations, we just need to be very clear-eyed and realistic about it."

**Graham: Talks Present "Best Hope In Decades."** The [New York Post](#) (3/8, Tacopino) reports Sen. Lindsey Graham said Thursday that he hoped for peace on the Korean Peninsula, but warned Kim Jong Un that "it will be the end" of him and his regime if he tried to take advantage of President Trump. Graham said the talks presented the "best hope in decades" to peacefully resolve the threat of nuclear conflict, but added "that if the past is an indications of the future, North Korea will be all talk and no action."

**Kristof: "A Dangerous Gamble And A Bad Idea."** In his [New York Times](#) (3/8) column, Nicholas Kristof calls the development "stunning," but adds, "it's also, I think, a dangerous gamble and a bad idea. I can't believe I'm saying that. For many years, over several trips to North Korea, I've argued for direct talks between the United States and North Korea, and it's certainly better to be engaging the North than bombing it. ... But the proper way to hold a summit is with careful preparation." Kim and Trump, Kristof cautions, "are both showmen with a flair for the dramatic and unexpected. That would make a summit thrilling – but creates great risks if everything turns out wrong."

**CBS News: South Korea Using Pop Culture As Propaganda Against North.** Meanwhile, the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/8, story 10, 2:25, Glor) reported, "How do you deal with a belligerent neighbor that constantly parades its tanks and fires off missiles? If you're South Korea, you crank



up the music." South Korea's military "blasts" K-Pop music across the border "to let North Koreans know what they're missing." Meanwhile, with South Korea TV programs and the Internet prohibited in North Korea, one "aid group puts flash drives containing soap operas and movies inside bottles of much-needed rice and floats them towards the North."

### **Trump Announces Tariffs To GOP Criticism, Praise From AFL-CIO.**

President Trump's announcement on steel and aluminum tariffs received extensive, including reports on all three major network newscasts and extensive local TV coverage throughout the Rust Belt. Illustrating how the trade debate is defying the usual partisan battle lines, the decision by Trump generated strong criticism from his own party and from business groups – even as it received praise from the steel and aluminum industries, organized labor and several red-state Democrats up for reelection in the fall.

Local TV reports in the Midwest were mostly sympathetic to Trump's actions. [WSYM-TV](#) Lansing, MI (3/8, 5:42 p.m. EST), for example, reported that Trump "made steel tariffs one of the cornerstones of his campaign, promising he would make sure American companies are getting a fair shake." Yesterday, "he followed through, signing a proclamation to implement them." [WLWT-TV](#) Cincinnati (3/8, 5:37 p.m. EST) reported that "the move does have the support of union leaders and Democratic lawmakers from Rust Belt states eager to revive industries hurting from excess production by China."

[NBC News](#) (3/8, Rafferty) similarly reported on its website that Trump's move "found support in some unlikely allies – red state Democrats," in particular "vulnerable Democrats up for re-election in November like Pennsylvania's Bob Casey, West Virginia's Joe Manchin and Wisconsin's Tammy Baldwin," who "represent states where Trump's message on manufacturing and trade resonated in 2016." The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/8, story 2, 2:00, Reid) showed Manchin saying, "I'm encouraged. I really am. And I think it gives us a chance, basically, to reboot, get jobs back to West Virginia, back to America. I'm excited about that." [Breitbart](#) (3/8, Boyle) also notes Manchin's comments.

Moreover, [Politico](#) (3/8, Restuccia, Behsudi) reports that "the president's decision...brought cheers from the steel industry and organized labor." Said the AFL-CIO's Richard Trumka, "Wall Street's hair is on fire over these tariffs because wealthy investors enrich themselves by closing mills and factories in the United States and moving them overseas. ... Using tariffs isn't going to start a trade war. There's been a war on working people for decades, and we have been getting our butts kicked. Just look at southwestern Pennsylvania if you want proof." Trumka also [tweeted](#), "People may not like how Pres Trump rolled these out, but I applaud him for trying."

In fact, Trumka's rhetoric was at minimum reminiscent of Trump's. [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/8, lead story, 2:35, Welker), which remarked on "opposition from many top Republicans who warn" the tariffs "could spark a trade war," showed Trump saying, "The workers who poured their souls into building this great nation were betrayed. But that betrayal is now over. I'm delivering on a promise I made during the campaign, and I've been making it for a good part of my life."

[WJAC-TV](#) Johnstown, PA (3/8, 6:11 p.m. EST) reported that Trump "was flanked by steel and aluminum workers as he claimed that trade practices by other nations have been what he's calling an assault on America." WJAC added, "With heavy blowback from Congressional Republicans, the president defended the move, arguing a healthy metals industry is vital to national security." Trump was shown saying, "A strong steel and aluminum industry are vital to our national security. Absolutely vital. Steel is steel. You don't have steel you don't have a country."

[WTAE-TV](#) Pittsburgh (3/8, 6:13 p.m. EST) reported on "the implications now for workers...in western Pennsylvania." WTAE showed Lane Steel President Paul Gedeon saying, "The tariffs will help if they are done the right way, if it's fair. Like, Canada should be excluded." WTAE added that Gedeon "says there is some foreign steel America needs and putting tariffs on all would hurt the US too." Gedeon: "A concern with that is it's like a cancer drug that kills good cells and bad cells."

The [Detroit News](#) (3/8, Laing) reports that Trump said yesterday, "This is not merely an economic disaster, but it's a security disaster. ... We want to build our ships, we want to build our planes, we want to build our military equipment with steel, with aluminum from our country. And now we're finally taking action to correct this long overdue problem. It's a travesty." Writing for [National Review](#) (3/8), Jack Crowe said the President's "emphasis on national security – Trump invoked the term numerous times during his speech – has prompted speculation that the administration is angling to avoid World Trade Organization sanctions, which punish members for implementing tariffs for reasons other than national security." Along those lines, Commerce

Secretary Ross argues in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/8) this morning that the tariffs are necessary to protect US security and to protect the well-being of US workers.

Bret Baier said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/8), "Politically, the image of the President with those steelworkers telling their stories about companies that are slowing down, shutting down, losing work, that politically works for this President." Joan Walsh of The Nation said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (3/8), "This really looked like a campaign rally. ... He talked about loving the workers. He talked about the farmers. He talked about how good he is going to be to all these people. It was political theater and nothing more."

GOP opposition to Trump's move was a major theme in the coverage. The [AP](#) (3/8, Thomas), for example, casts the President as "unswayed by Republican warnings of a trade war" and [The Hill](#) (3/8, Fabian, Needham) as "defying his own party and delivering on a campaign promise," while the [Washington Post](#) (3/8, Rucker, Werner) says he "bucked his party allies to pursue his long-held goal of rewriting what he views as rigged rules of international trade." However, where he "sees an opportunity to protect US manufacturing and blue-collar workers, his fellow Republicans – joined by some Democrats, business leaders and many economists – fear he's embarking on an impractical negotiating process that could escalate into a global trade war." At any rate, "few fellow Republicans appeared to have much appetite to challenge the move legislatively." [Business Insider](#) (3/8, Perticone) similarly indicates that Republicans "have been distraught over...Trump's proposal to slap tariffs on aluminum and steel," but they "are at a loss over what they can do about it other than plead for mercy from the White House."

Some appear intent on trying. [USA Today](#) (3/8, Gaudiano, Shesgreen) reports "at least one Republican senator said Congress would try to overturn" the tariffs. Said Sen. Jeff Flake, "Some of us are just waiting to see what he does, and then we'll draft legislation quickly to nullify it. ... That's what I'm going to do." [Reuters](#) (3/8) and [Politico](#) (3/8, Everett, Schor) also report on Flake's statement.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/8, lead story, 3:25, Karl) reported "the tariffs, 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminum, will be imposed on all imported steel except from Canada and Mexico, which are exempt, but only for now." As the [AP](#) (3/8, Thomas) reports, Trump explained Canada and Mexico are "exempted 'to see if we can make the deal.'" [Townhall](#) (3/8, O'Brien) noted that Trump said, "I have a feeling we're going to make a deal on NAFTA. ... If we do, there won't be any tariffs on Canada and there won't be any tariffs on Mexico." Commerce Secretary Ross said on [CNBC's Closing Bell](#) (3/8), "I think there's no question that the action the President took today is a further motivation to both Canada and Mexico to make a fair arrangement with the United States. It's pretty clear that is the case. This is not being done though just as a negotiating ploy. We are deadly serious about solving the problem in steel, aluminum, and as the weeks and months go by, other industries. The important thing is solving the problem. The less important thing is the exact mechanism for doing it, but we have to get it done."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (3/8, Spangler, Howard) notes that "other countries, and presumably industries, could negotiate with the Trump administration for exclusions as well." [CNBC](#) (3/8, Cox) cited an "Administration official" who said "determining further exceptions will depend on whether countries can convince Trump that there's a 'satisfactory alternative means' for resolving trade inequities." Trump, for his part, said yesterday, "We're going to show great flexibility." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/8, Schlesinger, Bender, Nicholas) runs a similar analysis.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/8, Westwood) reports Trump "encouraged foreign steel and aluminum producers to move their plants to the US to make their metals if they wish to avoid his tariffs, noting the recent tax legislation he signed would also benefit their business if they invested in the US." [Reuters](#) (3/8, Lawder, Mason) quotes Trump as saying, "If you don't want to pay tax, bring your plant to the USA." As he said that, he was "flanked by steel and aluminum workers." [USA Today](#) (3/8, Jackson) also recounts that "during the signing ceremony, Trump invited some of the steel workers, hard hats in hands, to speak about how their town have been hurt by the decline of the industry."

The [Washington Times](#) (3/8, Boyer) point out that "seemingly referring to other possible trade actions, Mr. Trump warned, 'This is only the first stop.'" The President also "said the US could use the tariffs against nations that are not paying their fair share of security alliances." Said Trump, "We're going to see who's treating us fairly, who's not treating us fairly – who's paying the bills, who's not paying the bills." [Bloomberg News](#) (3/8, Mayeda, Epstein) also noted Trump "warned there would be more tariffs coming, saying he planned to proceed with what he has called 'reciprocal taxes' on imports from countries that charge higher duties on US goods than the US now charges on their products." Trump said, "We're going to be doing a lot of that."

The [New York Times](#) (3/8, Baker, Swanson) reports the US "is the largest steel importer in the world and the order could hit South Korea, China, Japan, Germany, Turkey and Brazil the hardest." Trump "said his tariff orders were tailored to give him the authority to raise or lower levies on a country-by-country basis and add or take countries off the list as he deemed appropriate." Eswar Prasad, a professor of international trade at Cornell University, tells the Times, "This has certainly put the fear of God in America's trading partners. ... The day has actually come when real trade sanctions are on the board."

In a story on the tariffs' rollout, the [Washington Post](#) (3/8, Johnson, Kim, Dawsey) reports "the frantic lobbying went late into the night and on into the morning, as business executives, lawmakers and foreign diplomats tried to stop...Trump from implementing steel and aluminum tariffs." While "the idea of imposing tariffs on some imports was cheered at Trump's campaign rallies, Republican lawmakers and members of his administration have argued that instituting penalties on steel and aluminum could prompt other countries to impose retaliatory tariffs that hurt American farmers, producers and manufacturers, including in states that were key to the president's unexpected win in 2016."

[Breitbart](#) (3/8, Spiering) headlined its very favorable report "Promises Kept," and the [Daily Caller](#) (3/8, Enjeti) noted a "senior administration official lambasted critics of the President's tariffs saying, 'Nobody inside the beltway should express any sort of surprise. These have been well discussed and one of the most well signaled actions in the history of trade actions. ... This has been extremely well vetted and analyzed.'"

Commerce Secretary Ross said on [CNBC's Closing Bell](#) (3/8), "I don't think what we're doing is going to have such harmful economic consequences. The total tariff, assuming all that the steel and all the aluminum still comes in, which will not happen, some will be restricted because they won't pay the tariff, they'll ship it elsewhere, but if it all came through, you're talking \$9 billion a year. In an \$18 or \$19 trillion economy, that's a half of one percent. So, please spare me the idea this is going to be massively destructive to our economy."

***Humorous Exchange Between Trump, Local Union Leader Recounted.*** [Politico](#) (3/8, Lima) reports the President "turned over the mic to several workers from the industry who were invited to the meeting in the West Wing." Scott Sauritch, "leader of the Steelworkers 2227 local union in West Mifflin, Pennsylvania, told the president and assembled reporters that his father, Herman, a former worker in the steel industry, once lost his job due to increased imports." Trump replied, "Your father, Herman, he's looking down, and he's very proud of you right now." After Sauritch responded, "Oh, he's still alive," the room "burst into laughter," and Trump quipped, "Then he's even more proud of you."

***Stocks Closed Higher.*** The [Detroit Free Press](#) (3/8, Spangler, Howard) reports that "the Dow Jones Industrial Average, which plummeted nearly 500 points initially a week ago when Trump first said he would impose the tariffs, appeared to take Thursday's news in stride, up just over 90 points to 24,895 in afternoon trading." [Reuters](#) (3/8, Carew) indicates "the three major US stock indexes closed higher...after...Trump appeared to soften his stance on trade tariffs, easing trade war fears that had had the market on edge for a week." The S&P "gained 12.17 points, or 0.45 percent, to 2,738.97 and the Nasdaq Composite added 31.30 points, or 0.42 percent, to 7,427.95."

***Tribune Analysis: "Hope Coming Back To Granite City."*** The [Chicago Tribune](#) (3/9, Bomkamp) reports "there's hope coming back to Granite City," the "small Illinois steel town outside St. Louis" that "felt the bedrock shift in 2015 when one of its biggest and best-paying employers, US Steel, said it would idle its Granite City plant and cut 2,000 jobs." This Wednesday, "the company said it will restart one of two blast furnaces — where the steelmaking process begins — next month."

***Media Analyses, Industry Groups, GOP Lawmakers: Trump Tariffs Will Hurt US Economy.*** Most mainstream media reports echoed GOP criticism of Trump's trade moves as unsound economic policy. The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/8, story 2, 2:00, Reid), for example, reported that "here are about 140,000 American steelworkers who could benefit from the tariffs," but "there are 6.5 million workers in US industries that buy steel that could be harmed." The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/8, story 4, 1:05, Schlesinger) also said US "consumers are looking at potentially higher prices," and added that if "there are those retaliatory measures, that's not good for growth for the economy" and "may not be very good for the stock market, which could put your 401(k) or IRA at risk." In a report from the Oskar Blues Brewery in Langmont, CO, meanwhile, [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/8, story 2, 2:00, Almaguer) said prices are "expected to rise for products like soda cans, electronics, even cars," and at "plants like this one, where they're processing steel today, the impact of new tariffs is unclear, but the uncertainty could lead to downsizing, even

layoffs in the near future."

[PBS NewsHour](#) (3/8, Blush), which reported "the proposal was met with near-universal opposition from economists, academics, business leaders and even some top officials in the Trump administration," went on to offer criticism of the plan from a number of "trade experts," who similarly argued the tariffs will lead to job losses for the overall economy. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/8, Lee) echoed those themes in its analysis, and went on to bemoan "the sloppy rollout, lack of details and uncertain process that lay ahead," which "could mean that the tariff plan – like so many other Trump programs – finds itself tied up in legal challenges or congressional roadblocks."

In the lead story for the first hour of [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/8), Wolf Blitzer said Trump "may have just started a trade war" in a move that has "infuriated allies." [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/8) showed French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian saying that the EU will "introduce countermeasures to...Trump's very inappropriate initiative, which might prove advantageous for the United States right away, but which in the long run will harm the United States' influence in the world." Meanwhile, China "suggested this might be the first shot in a trade war." Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi was shown saying, "In the event of a trade war, China will make a justified and necessary response."

The [Columbus \(OH\) Dispatch](#) (3/8, Torry) also reports that Trump's decision "should provide a boost to Ohio's steel industry, but is likely to lead to higher prices for trucks, cars, and machinery." Moreover, "if the new tariffs spark a major trade war, Ohio manufacturing and agricultural exports could be hurt."

The [Detroit News](#) (3/8, Laing) reports that "in a Ford Motor Co. statement released after Thursday's announcement, the company said, 'Despite the fact that Ford buys the vast majority of its steel and aluminum for US production in the US, this action could result in an increase in domestic commodity prices – harming the competitiveness of American manufacturers.'" John Bozzella, CEO of the Association of Global Automakers that "represents foreign-based manufacturers, added: 'Exemptions will not address the fundamental problems tariffs will create for US car and truck manufacturing. Increased costs will make our industry less competitive and harm American workers, consumers, and our economy.'"

[USA Today](#) (3/8, Davidson) reports "Electrolux, Europe's largest home appliance maker, has shelved a \$250 million expansion of a plant in Tennessee. American automakers are forecasting rising prices," and "the maker of Jack Daniels is warning analysts of a potential hit to earnings."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/8, Higgins) reports "the beer lobby on Thursday asked...Trump to include an exception for brewers when his 10 percent tariff on aluminum imports is implemented and argued that it will unnecessarily harm its industry." Said Jim McGreevy, president of the Beer Institute, "This tariff on aluminum will hurt American breweries and beer importers that are employing Americans and producing beer, America's most popular alcohol beverage. ... This tariff will raise costs and slow the innovation that has made our nation's beer industry more vibrant than at any point in history."

The [Albany \(NY\) Business Review](#) (3/8, Diana) notes that according to a report from Deutsche Bank analyst John Inch, "General Electric Co. could be hit hard as steel and aluminum prices rise" because of the tariffs. Lynch said GE "faces two major risks, higher costs and lost business caused by trade retaliation from other countries." In fact, the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/8, Siegel) reports, "energy industry representatives said Thursday they would be interested in applying for an exemption from...Trump's order imposing steel and aluminum tariffs." The Examiner adds that "before Trump made the tariffs official Thursday, a coalition of oil, natural gas and pipeline groups urged the president to allow exemptions for when businesses need steel products from overseas for energy production, processing, refining, transportation, and distribution."

[Reuters](#) (3/8) reports Speaker Ryan "said on Thursday the United States should initiate 'surgical' actions against China to stop it from dumping steel and aluminum instead of...Trump's broader tariff plan." Speaking to employees of Home Depot in Atlanta, Ryan said, "I really think the best policy is to be surgical and specific. ... I'm just not a fan of broad-based, across-the-board tariffs because I think you'll have a lot of unintended consequences. You'll have a lot of collateral damage."

[Reuters](#) (3/8) also reports that Senate Majority Leader McConnell "said on Thursday he was concerned about the scope" of the tariffs. Said the Kentucky senator, "Members of the Senate, myself included, are concerned about the scope of the proposed tariffs on steel and aluminum and their impact on American citizens and businesses."

[Breitbart](#) (3/8, Hanchett) reports that on CNN's "New Day," Sen. Ron Johnson also "stated that he opposes a general tariff, which 'would actually harm allies, harm American consumers, by

the way, harm American workers that use steel in production,' and that no one wins trade wars."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/8, Zakaria) that "having transformed the party's views on issues as diverse as immigration, fiscal discipline, foreign policy and law enforcement, if Trump wins the battle over trade with his party, he will have won the war" and the GOP "will be history. And given his long-demonstrated preferences in this regard, who knows — he will probably want to rename it the Trump Party."

Katie Pavlich of Townhall.com said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/8), "For Republicans who have criticized this, it's not just that they on principle oppose these tariffs, which they do based on the history of how tariffs affect of the economy in this country. They are also doing this politically because if the tariffs do take away all of the gains from tax reform that Republicans have been able to go back to their districts and election year and tout, they can say that they were against it from the beginning, and it's not necessarily their fault because they had that distance from the President on the issue."

Charles Lane of the Washington Post said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/8), "Economically, this is kind of an unsquareable circle. This thing can either have its effect and save those steel jobs...or it can be acceptable to our allies. It can't really be both. What I think the President has set up here is this funny kind of lobby-o-rama in Washington where everybody and their paid hired guns in Washington are going to suddenly bombard the bureaucracy — Bob Lighthizer in particular — with their plea for some kind of a carve out in this thing."

[WKBN-TV](#) Youngstown, OH (3/8, 6:00 p.m. EST) showed Sen. Sherrod Brown saying, "I would've aimed at China rather than Canada. And I would've made the tariff higher against china — 50% more or less rather than the 25% to everybody because I think that China has been the main part of this problem."

**WPost Analysis: US Allies, And Particularly Japan, Feel Insulted By Tariffs.** Under the headline "US Allies See Trump's Steel Tariffs As An Insult," the [Washington Post](#) (3/8, Fifield, Birnbaum) highlights the effect of Trump's announcement on Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who "has cultivated a close personal relationship with his American counterpart" and "has been an enthusiastic supporter of almost everything Trump has said, especially when it comes to putting 'maximum pressure' on North Korea." In addition to being "likely to be slapped with tariffs on its steel exports to the United States," Trump added "insult to injury" by arguing the move "is rooted in national security." The Post adds that "bewilderment, along with anger and frustration, has rippled across the capitals of US allies."

**WSJournal Analysis: Navarro's Trade Policies Are Being Realized.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/8, Davis) writes that President Trump's trade adviser Peter Navarro, who supports Trump's proclaimed steel and aluminum tariffs, could replace recently resigned National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn. The Journal also says Trump's next trade moves may include sanctions on China for intellectual-property violations, which Navarro has also been pushing. The Journal provides background on Navarro's trade policies and the resignation of Cohn.

**WSJournal, NYTimes, WPost, Krugman All Oppose Trump Tariffs.** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/8) denounces the tariffs as reminiscent of 1930s protectionism, which it says aggravated the Great Depression. The Journal also warns Trump that yesterday's decision threatens to undo much of the success he has encountered on the economic front in his first year as president.

The [New York Times](#) (3/8) editorializes that "the tariffs will have little impact on China." Rather, their "primary victims...will be American allies like the European Union and South Korea." Trump's "approach should worry everyone concerned about a trade war or the health of the steel and aluminum industries."

Paul Krugman, in his [New York Times](#) (3/8) column, says "trade (like racism) is an issue on which Trump has been utterly consistent over the years." His "steel and aluminum tariffs, justified with an obviously bogus appeal to national security, clearly don't pass" that test, "so Trump is in effect both violating US law and throwing the world trading system under the bus. And if this escalates into a full-scale trade war, we'll be back to the bad old days."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/8) editorializes, "What's ugliest here is Mr. Trump's relentless and indiscriminate assault on long-standing allies, many of which, he said, 'treat us the worst.'" While "Canada's dependence on the US market is such that it's possible Mr. Trump's squeeze will have its purported intended effect of forcing Canada to give ground in the NAFTA talks," the move will demonstrate "to the world the risks of befriendng America, and of dealing openly and honestly with us, Mr. Trump's pressure tactics could have unintended negative consequences for years to come."



## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

***"What Happened To Trump's Red Line On Chemical Weapons?"*** The [New York Times](#) (3/8) editorializes that despite President Trump's early action against Syria for its chemical weapons use, it has failed to deter the Assad regime from using them. In the 11 months since Trump ordered missile attacks on Syria, "there have been many such attacks, including at least six this year," but "Trump seems less sure-footed about responding to atrocities." Amid the most recent attacks, the Times says, "Trump remains silent."

***"Donald Trump's Empty Words On Trade."*** The [New York Times](#) (3/8) editorializes that President Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs "will have little impact on China." Rather, their "primary victims...will be American allies like the European Union and South Korea." Trump's "approach should worry everyone concerned about a trade war or the health of the steel and aluminum industries."

***"The Trump Administration's Backward Attitude Toward Birth Control."*** The [New York Times](#) (3/8) editorializes that the Trump Administration's recent announcement about funding for Title X, "a major family planning program," will "thwart" women's progress in America. The Times cites data showing a strong correlation between wage gains and access to birth control for women, and criticize the government's announcement that it "wants to fund 'innovative' services and emphasizes 'fertility awareness' approaches," rather than funding "reliable" contraceptive methods such as the intrauterine device (IUD). The Times calls the Administration's priorities "backward and unscientific," and argues that such decisions "will harm the health and self-determination of women, particularly the most vulnerable among them."

### Washington Post.

***"Trump's Belittling Of Allies Is Unworthy Of A US President."*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/8) editorializes, "What's ugliest here is Mr. Trump's relentless and indiscriminate assault on long-standing allies, many of which, he said, 'treat us the worst.'" While "Canada's dependence on the US market is such that it's possible Mr. Trump's squeeze will have its purported intended effect of forcing Canada to give ground in the NAFTA talks," the move will demonstrate "to the world the risks of befriending America, and of dealing openly and honestly with us, Mr. Trump's pressure tactics could have unintended negative consequences for years to come."

***"Is Putin's Poison Squad Back In Britain?"*** A [Washington Post](#) (3/8) editorial says the attack on Sergei Skripal "could be a revenge assassination attempt, similar to those carried out in the past by Russia. If so, it would be another brazen crime by President Vladimir Putin that cannot be ignored."

***"A Rarity For The NRA: Defeat."*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/8) cites Florida lawmakers' passage of a gun and school safety bill as proof that the "fearless student survivors of the Parkland, Fla., mass shooting are changing the debate about gun control. Proof lies in the Florida legislature's vote for new firearms regulations and other gun-violence prevention measures." The Post calls their "victory over the National Rifle Association in a state that has long done the gun-rights group's bidding...nothing short of stunning" and expresses hope that "it will embolden efforts in other states – not to mention in Congress – for stricter gun-control laws that will help protect public safety."

### Wall Street Journal.

***"Trump's Hoover Temptation."*** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/8) denounces President Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs as reminiscent of 1930s protectionism, which it says aggravated the Great Depression. The Journal also warns Trump that yesterday's decision threatens to undo much of the success he has encountered on the economic front in his first year as president.

***"Xi Jinping's Military Might."*** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/8) criticizes developments in China under President Xi Jinping, including a military buildup and the stoking of nationalist sentiment, as well as his recent constitutional changes to remain president for life. The Journal describes the trends, and argues that Xi's actions may be inviting international conflict.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

**Wall Street Journal:**

[Trump Agrees To Meet North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un](#)  
[Trump Signs Metals Tariffs Sparing Some Allies](#)  
[Mortgage Rates At A Four-Year High Threaten To Roil Housing](#)  
[After Addiction Comes Families' Second Blow: The Crushing Cost Of Rehab](#)

**New York Times:**

[Kim Offers Nuclear Talks; Trump Accepts](#)  
[Russia's Greatest Problem In Syria: Its Ally, President Assad](#)  
[GOP Is Spending Millions To Win A Vanishing Seat](#)  
[Trump Signs Tariff Orders, Ignoring Allies And His Party](#)

**Washington Post:**

[From US allies, Confusion, Anger And Frustration](#)  
[Pushback Begins As Tariffs Are Enacted](#)  
[Iranian Women Daring To Doff Their Headscarves](#)  
[From Scorn To Payday: Dominion's Big Play](#)  
[President's Bellicosity Secures A Diplomatic Coup – For Now](#)

**Financial Times:**

[Tillerson Tells Africa That China Finance Imperils Their Sovereignty](#)  
[Trump Adopts Steel Tariffs But Opens Door To Exemptions](#)  
[Geneva Glitz Cannot Hide Angst Over Electric Cars](#)  
[ECB Drops Pledge To Buy More Bonds If Needed](#)

**Washington Times:**

[Trump Agrees To Meet With North Korean Leader Kim Jong-Un In May](#)  
[Trump Spares NAFTA Partners From Tariffs On Steel, Aluminum](#)  
[States Rush Past Idling Congress To Enact Stricter Gun Laws](#)  
[Hollywood Condemns NRA While Dramatically Increasing Gun Violence In Entertainment](#)  
[Slovakian Journalists Pledge To Finish Slain Colleague's Story About Political Corruption](#)  
[Unlikely Leader Pulls Right-Wing Fringe Party To Italy's Political Power Center](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Trump-Tariff Announcement; Trump-North Korea; North Carolina Police Beating; Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Russia Probe; Florida School Shooting Investigation; UK-Poisoned Former Russian Spy; Arizona Police Collision; Missouri Police Shooting; Missing Girl Search; Mexico-Travel Alert; Viral Penguin Video.

**CBS:** Florida School Shooting Investigation; Trump-Tariff Announcement; Trump-North Korea; Tariff Announcement-Expert Comment; Severe Weather; Video Game-Violence; Mexico-Travel Alert; Teen Police Impostors; Spain Women's Strike; Star Wars Celeb; South Korea-DMZ K-Pop.

**NBC:** Trump-Tariff Announcement; Tariff Announcement-Public Opinions; North Carolina Police Beating; Severe Weather; Cleveland Fertility Clinic Mismanagement; Florida School Shooting Investigation; Women For Congress; Equifax Security Breach Aftermath; Mexico-Travel Alert; Flying Car For Sale; Elderly Friends; Viral Penguin Video; Hospital Patient Couple.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Tariff Announcement – 11 minutes, 5 seconds  
Florida School Shooting Investigation – 6 minutes, 45 seconds  
Severe Weather – 5 minutes, 50 seconds  
Mexico-Travel Alert – 3 minutes, 30 seconds

**Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:**

**ABC:** Trump-North Korea Invitation; Trump-Tariff Announcement; Russian Probe; Toys R Us Liquidation; Wall Street News.

**CBS:** Trump-North Korea Invitation; Trump-Tariff Announcement; Florida School Shooting Investigation; Severe Weather; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Trump-North Korea Invitation; Trump-Tariff Announcement.

**NPR:** Trump-North Korea Invitation; Trump-Tariff Announcement; Severe Weather; Wall Street News.



## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

#### White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — No public event scheduled.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Delivers keynote remarks at an America First Policies "Tax Cuts to Put America First" event; participates in a campaign event for Congressman Steve Stivers of Ohio.

**US Senate:** 12:00 PM EESI co-hosts '2018 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook' briefing – '2018 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook' briefing hosted by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy in coordination with the House and Senate Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Caucuses. Executives from BCSE member companies and analysts from Bloomberg New Energy Finance discuss questions including 'What is the cost of energy for consumers and businesses, and how has this evolved?', 'Which energy technologies are the most competitive?', 'Are the recent changes in the U.S. energy mix structural, or temporary?', 'How is energy efficiency impacting U.S. economic competitiveness?', 'How are utilities and other companies investing in the future of U.S. energy infrastructure?', and 'How does the U.S. rank globally in terms of clean energy investment?' Location: Rm 2168, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC [www.eesi.org/](http://www.eesi.org/) [#eesitalk](https://twitter.com/eesionline)

**US House:** 12:00 PM EESI co-hosts '2018 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook' briefing – '2018 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook' briefing hosted by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy in coordination with the House and Senate Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Caucuses. Executives from BCSE member companies and analysts from Bloomberg New Energy Finance discuss questions including 'What is the cost of energy for consumers and businesses, and how has this evolved?', 'Which energy technologies are the most competitive?', 'Are the recent changes in the U.S. energy mix structural, or temporary?', 'How is energy efficiency impacting U.S. economic competitiveness?', 'How are utilities and other companies investing in the future of U.S. energy infrastructure?', and 'How does the U.S. rank globally in terms of clean energy investment?' Location: Rm 2168, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC [www.eesi.org/](http://www.eesi.org/) [#eesitalk](https://twitter.com/eesionline)

12:00 PM Congressional Internet Caucus Academy event on EU General Data Protection Regulation – Congressional Internet Caucus Academy hosts 'EU Privacy Countdown: What the GDPR Regulations Mean For Your Constituents' event, featuring Venable partner Kelly DeMarchis Bastide, Future of Privacy Forum Communications Director Melanie Bates, Delegation of the European Union to the United States Counsellor Aymeric Dupont, R Street Institute Director of Innovation Policy Mike Godwin, and Center for Democracy & Technology Policy Counsel Joe Jerome Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2237, Washington, DC [www.netcaucus.org](http://www.netcaucus.org) [#CICAGDPR](https://twitter.com/NetCaucusAC)

12:30 PM House Armed Services Committee informational session for media on the NDAA – House Armed Services Committee 'NDAA 101' off-the-record informational session, designed to educate reporters about the National Defense Authorization Act, including information and tools to aid the press corps in covering the NDAA process, including an overview of how it is constructed and the process the Committee follows to pass it Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives.

**Other:** Vice President Mike Pence campaigns in Ohio for Republican Rep. Steve Stivers, who is running for re-election Location: Cleveland [www.stevestivers.com](http://www.stevestivers.com) <https://twitter.com/stevestivers>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "South Korea officials delivered a letter from Kim Jong-Un, leader of North Korea, to promise to meet with Donald Trump to halt his missile test. So the North Korea leader extended an olive branch, which is all they have to eat there."

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "President Trump appreciated the briefing and said he would meet Kim Jong-Un by May. By May? He's not still going to be President by May. This needs to happen by Wednesday. Imagine Kim Jong-Un meeting Donald Trump, the two worst haircuts in the world together."

**Stephen Colbert:** "Today, Donald Trump made good on his promise and slapped import tariffs on steel and aluminum. Our allies have already begun threatening to retaliate. The EU says they'll respond with tariffs on whiskey and peanut butter, which means it could get a lot pricier for Europeans to enjoy a PB&Jack."

**James Corden:** "There's more news out of the Russia investigation, for months the FBI has been questioning witnesses about possible collusion between the Trump Administration and Russia. And according to a new report Donald Trump has been asking the witnesses what questions came up in the interview. Trump's basically that kid without didn't study for a test and he's like, 'What did you get for number two? Same, same.'"

**Trevor Noah:** "The point is Trump is not a fan of video games, partly because the controllers are too big and also because he believes they inspire real world violence. ... The truth is many countries around the world have figured this out. The most effective and realistic way to limit gun violence is to regulate who has access to guns. While the President is talking about video games, interestingly enough, lawmakers in Florida have sided to take action."

**Seth Meyers:** "The President of the United States got a restraining order against a porn star, which means we have to say goodbye to the old lowest point in American history. Goodbye, Garth Brooks's rock and roll alter ego Chris Gaines!"

**Seth Meyers:** "Apparently Mueller is now homing in on Erik Prince, founder of the mercenary company Blackwater and an advisor to Trump's transition team. Specifically, Mueller is now looking at a secret meeting Prince held with a Kremlin emissary on a remote island shortly after the election. ... Wait. You're telling me a secret meeting on a remote island in the Indian Ocean between a mercenary and an agent of the Kremlin turned out to be suspicious? Where was the meeting? Inside a volcano the shape of a skull?"

**Conan O'Brien:** "There's an attempt to silence porn star Stormy Daniels by President Trump's lawyer. kind of sad that, in that sentence, the most degrading job mentioned was President Trump's lawyer."

**Conan O'Brien:** "President Trump is planning on meeting about violence with the heads of the video game industry. However, some people worry that it's just a trap so that Trump can deport the Mario brothers."

**Jordan Klepper:** "Not obstruction for Trump to ask if the people investigating him were nice. He probably wanted to see if he should send Mueller a thank you gift like flowers or veiled threats or a pink slip. This wasn't witness tampering. It's just office small talk. Not Trump's fault that the FBI wants to interrogate everyone who works for him. He's just chatting."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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## **DOI In The News**

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### **Zinke Says Interior Should Be A Partner With Oil Companies.**

The [AP](#) (3/6, Koenig) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "says his agency should be a partner with oil and gas companies that seek to drill on public land and that long regulatory reviews with an uncertain outcome are 'un-American.'" Speaking at a major energy-industry conference on Tuesday, Zinke talked about the Trump Administration's "efforts to increase offshore drilling, reduce regulations, and streamline inspections of oil and gas operators." Zinke said, "Interior should not be in the business of being an adversary. We should be in the business of being a partner."

[Courthouse News](#) (3/6, Renda) reports that "Zinke's latest overture to the oil and gas industry prompted more rage from environmentalists who say the Trump administration and the Department of Interior are far too cozy with an industry many see as responsible for the exacerbation of climate change and pollution." Lena Moffitt of the Sierra Club said in a statement Tuesday, "The Department of the Interior is tasked with protecting our public lands and waters for the public good, not easing the way for corporate polluters to drill, frack, and mine them for their own profits."

Additional coverage was provided by [Platts](#) (3/6, Scheid) and [Law360](#) (3/6, Casady).

[Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke Says Natural Gas Flaring Is 'Wasteful'.](#) The [Houston Chronicle](#) (3/6, Osborne) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Tuesday said "oil and gas operations on federal lands could soon be offered a financial incentive to stop flaring natural gas from oil wells." Zinke "described the practice as 'wasteful' and raised the possibility of reducing the royalties collected by the federal government and speeding up permitting times for pipelines and other infrastructure needed to get gas to market." He said, "I don't know what the future is, just that flaring is a waste."

[Ryan Zinke Said Wind Power Leads To Global Warming.](#) [TIME](#) (3/6, Worland) reports that "in a speech before oil and gas industry executives, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke argued that the production and transportation of wind turbines contributes to global warming, but he overstated the factual case, especially when compared with other forms of energy." In his comments, Zinke "acknowledged that fossil fuels generate carbon dioxide emissions to argue that 'every type of energy has a consequence,' though he did not expand on that concern." His remarks "came as part of call for an 'all of the above' energy strategy in which oil and gas continue to play a significant role."

### **U.S. To Allow Elephant Trophy Imports Despite Trump's Condemnation.**

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/6, Dlouhy) reports that the US is "opening the door to allowing elephant hunters to bring tusks and other animal parts into the country as trophies," despite President Trump's condemnation of the practice as a "horror show." The Interior Department says it is "revising the way it reviews applications to import hunted animal parts in response to a federal court opinion and withdrawing broad conclusions that applied to African elephants killed in Zimbabwe." The policy move, outlined in a March 1 memo, "means that some African elephants taken in Zimbabwe could be imported," according to Bloomberg. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/6, story 9, 0:30, Muir) briefly reported that the US Fish and Wildlife Service will now "issue permits to import hunting trophies on a case by case basis. The President is not hunter, but his sons are, and they have made the argument that the money hunters spend on safari supports conservation and local economies."

[The Hill](#) (3/6, Green) reports that "wildlife conservation and animal rights groups are slamming the Trump administration's move to permit some imports of African elephant trophies, fearing the new system will allow decisions to be made in secret." The Interior Department "said the FWS had no choice but to change its policy after a D.C. Circuit Court ruling in December struck down an Obama-era policy that banned importing elephant hunting trophies from Zimbabwe." However, "animal conservation groups are calling the policy change an obvious workaround to the federal court's ruling, which said the FWS should go through an extensive public notice and comment process when proposing a regulation on the trophy imports."

Also reporting are the [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Rosenberg), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (3/6,

Biesecker), [USA Today](#) (3/7, Cerbin, Today), [CNN](#) (3/6, Wallace), [NBC News](#) (3/6, Clark), [NPR](#) (3/6, Dwyer), the [Huffington Post](#) (3/6, Visser, D'Angelo), and [Voice of America](#) (3/6).

### **Congressional Delegation Seeks Disaster Designation For Blackfeet Reservation.**

The [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (3/6, Puckett) reports that "Montana's congressional delegation on Tuesday asked Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to designate the Blackfeet Reservation a disaster area due to the harsh winter." The letter by Sen. Steve Daines, Sen. Jon Tester and Rep. Greg Gianforte stated, "We write to echo the urgent request from Chairman Barnes of Montana's Blackfeet Tribe to apply a U.S. Department of Agriculture secretarial disaster designation to the Blackfeet Reservation, as well as provide any additional emergency assistance available within each of your departments as expeditiously as possible given the crippling snowfall that has hit the tribe."

### **Local Elected Officials Demand Paul Ryan Move To Protect Public Lands.**

The [Wisconsin Gazette](#) (3/6) reports that "more than 300 elected officials in Wisconsin have signed a letter calling on House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., to protect public lands – in his home state and across the country." President Trump's "newest budget proposes a 90 percent reduction in the Land and Water Conservation Fund – a fund that Wisconsin relies heavily upon to maintain its public lands, according to a news release from the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters." Kerry Schumann, executive director, stated in the release, "Eliminating the LWCF would be a direct attack on local communities throughout Wisconsin and the state's outdoor recreation industry. Local elected officials understand the value of healthy parks and public lands. Speaker Paul Ryan must stand up against these attacks and work for Wisconsinites – not special interests."

### **Aleutians East Borough Votes To Join Feds In Battle Over King Cove Road.**

[KUCB-FM](#) Unalaska, AK (3/6, Sobel) reports that "the Aleutians East Borough plans to join the legal battle over a land exchange that would allow construction of a controversial road between King Cove and Cold Bay." Assembly members "voted unanimously last week to intervene on the side of the federal government in the lawsuit environmental groups brought against the Interior Department to stop the road." The Borough also "approved spending \$61,875 to hire a law firm to help them join the case."

### **Campaign Urges Interior To Honor Sage Grouse Deal.**

[Public News Service](#) (3/7, Galatas) reports that "a new television and online campaign is calling on the U.S. Department of the Interior to honor a deal made by the federal government to preserve critical sage-grouse habitat." Hunter and conservationist Walt Gasson "stars in the ad." Gasson "said if Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke truly believes that decisions are best made by people affected on the ground, hunters, ranchers and conservationists need a seat at the table." The campaign, "produced by the National Wildlife Federation, will run in Wyoming, Colorado, Montana, Idaho, Nevada and Washington, D.C."

### **Interior Seeks Social Media Management Tool.**

[Government Computer News](#) (3/6, Friedman) reports that "to better manage more than 1,500 social media accounts for Department of Interior components – including the National Park Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Fish and Wildlife Service and other bureaus – Interior officials want information on enterprisewide social media management tools." The department is "looking for tools that can manage over 1,000 users that post on third-party social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn and Pinterest."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **New Mexico Official Threatens To Erect Fence To Block Border Patrol Operations.**

The [AP](#) (3/6) reports that New Mexico Land Commissioner Aubrey Dunn, a candidate for US Senate, posted signs along the US-Mexico border Tuesday "aimed at blocking border patrol operations on a one-mile stretch of state trust land over concerns that the federal government is not compensating the state for using the land." Dunn, a Libertarian, told the AP "that if his office can't reach an agreement over an easement with the federal government, he will install a fence to block access to the property." Dunn "said a survey by the Bureau of Land Management and



other records show the state owns the entire parcel and that the federal government never received permission from the state to build the border barrier that has existed there for years, or to use the roads in the area.”

### **About 100,000 Public Comments Supporting Sage Grouse Plans Missing In Federal Report, Some Say.**

The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (3/6, Richards) reports that the Bureau of Land Management “quietly released the initial report Friday which details responses to potential changes to federal management plans” for the sage grouse. However, “conservation advocates say the summary leaves out about 100,000 comments in support of existing protections.” More than 20 conservation groups “say the letters were sent to the appropriate Bureau of Land Management emails and have asked that the agency redo the report to include their comments.” Don Smurthwaite, a spokesman from the national office, said, “We’re aware of the concern and are checking to ensure that all comments and issues are represented in the final scoping report.”

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Hundreds Of State Lawmakers Ask For 5-year Plan Exemptions.**

[E&E Publishing](#) (3/6) continues coverage of lawmakers’ Monday letter to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke seeking exclusion of “their shores from the department’s draft five-year plan for offshore energy development.” BOEM officials say Florida “remains a part of the agency’s analysis but that Zinke’s preferences will be influential in the drafting of the proposed and final versions of the five-year plan.” Interior spokesman Alex Hinson said in response, “Creating a Five Year Program is a very open and public process, and Secretary Zinke looks forward to meeting with more Governors and other coastal representatives who want to discuss the draft program. Aside from those important meetings, there is continued outreach by the Department.” E&E adds, “BOEM has scheduled 23 meetings, largely in the capitals of coastal states, to solicit public input.” In a separate Monday letter, Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and other “senators requested to extend the comment period on the draft plan.”

## **Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement**

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### **Coast Guard Responders Harmed By Chemicals Used To Clean Up BP Oil Spill, Research Shows.**

The [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (3/5, Baurick) reports that for the members of the Coast Guard “who responded to the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon disaster, the dangers were clear – an oil platform in flames and then a hole in the seafloor spewing millions of gallons of oil. But what made many Coast Guard members truly afraid was what came after.” As the responders “worked to contain the spill, airplanes swooped in low, spraying a mysterious concoction of chemicals. These oil dispersants, BP hoped, would quickly cleanup its monumental mess.” A study released by the Uniformed Services University “indicates their fears were well-founded.” The research found “the nearly 2,000 Coast Guard members who reported exposure to oil dispersants suffered a range of illnesses – lung irritation, skin rash, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea – at higher rates than members who were not exposed to the chemicals or were exposed to oil alone.”

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **South Carolina Residents Criticize Osprey Nest Removal.**

The [AP](#) (3/6) reports that US wildlife officials are “investigating after South Carolina residents complained that a utility removed an osprey’s nest from a utility pole.” The nest was removed by a South Carolina Electric & Gas Co. crew last week. According to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “a federal investigation is underway.”

### **States To Begin Surveys For Lesser-Prairie Chicken.**

The [AP](#) (3/7) reports that “wildlife managers in several states will begin surveys later this month to track the population of a grouse that has been the focus of an ongoing legal battle over whether it warrants federal protection.” According to officials, “aerial surveys for the lesser-prairie



chicken in New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas will start March 16 and run through mid-May."

### **Public Hearing Scheduled On Proposed Kuskokwim King Salmon Restrictions.**

[KYUK-TV](#) Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, AK (3/6, MacArthur) reports that "biologists are expecting another low king salmon run on the Kuskokwim River this summer, and to conserve these stocks, federal managers want to restrict fishing in the same ways as in recent years." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is requesting certain restrictions from the Federal Subsistence Board. The restrictions have "been applied to the federal waters of the Kuskokwim drainage since 2014." The Federal Subsistence Board will hold a hearing on the proposed restrictions on March 14.

## **National Park Service**

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### **2 Arrested At Yellowstone Park's Bison Corral.**

The [AP](#) (3/6) reports that Yellowstone National Park rangers "arrested two people who were trying to chain themselves to a corral where wild bison are held," according to officials. Park spokeswoman Vicki Regula "declined to identify them or say whether they were being detained or charged." The AP cites the Bozeman Daily Chronicle, which "reported the people arrested are affiliated with an advocacy group called Wild Buffalo Defense and seek to draw attention to the slaughter of bison."

### **New Marker Notes Confederate General's Role In Slave Trade.**

The [AP](#) (3/6) reports that "a new historical marker in Memphis will point out that a famed Confederate general was a prosperous slave trader before the Civil War." According to the article, "the marker near the site of Nathan Bedford Forrest's early home will be unveiled April 4 on the property of Calvary Episcopal Church, which is sponsoring it along with Rhodes College and the National Park Service." The new marker "says Forrest operated a slave trading business at the site."

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **DOI Issues \$5M Authorization To Proceed With CUC Projects.**

The [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (3/7, De La Torre) reports that the Office of Insular Affairs has "issued an authorization to proceed in the amount of \$5 million for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s Engineering and Environmental Management Company construction management, the CUC pipeline smart piggng, waste management, and facility drainage projects." OIA grants manager Krystina B. Alfano "notified CNMI Capital Improvement Projects administrator Elizabeth S. Balajadia on Monday of OIA's approval of the authorization to proceed with the projects." Also, the [Marianas Variety](#) (3/7, Manabat) reports that Deputy Attorney General Lillian A. Tenorio "notified the federal court that the CNMI has received the authorization to proceed or ATP from Interior-OIA."

### **Breast Cancer Care In U.S. Territories Lags Behind Care In States.**

[Yale University \(CT\)](#) (3/5, Kashef) reports that "older women residing in the U.S territories are less likely to receive recommended or timely care for breast cancer compared with similar women residing in the continental United States, according to Yale researchers." The findings, published in the March issue of Health Affairs, said that "compared to women living in the continental United States (defined as 48 contiguous states, Alaska, and the District of Columbia), women in these territories who had surgical treatment for breast cancer were significantly less likely to receive other recommended care, the researchers said." Cary Gross, M.D., professor of medicine at Yale School of Medicine and senior author of the study, said, "Inferior breast cancer care in U.S. territories is particularly concerning, given that our study focused on a time period prior to Hurricane Maria. Our findings suggest that efforts to address the devastating impact of the hurricane on the citizens and healthcare infrastructure of the Caribbean territories need to focus on making the system better than it was."

## **US Geological Survey**

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## **Former Astronaut From Colorado Vows To Shield U.S. Geological Survey From Politics.**

The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (3/6, Eversden) reports, "Senators pressed former astronaut James Reilly of Colorado Springs on his commitment to scientific facts Tuesday at his confirmation hearing to lead the U.S. Geological Survey." Reilly "said throughout his appearance before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources he would maintain the integrity of the agency and refuse to bow to political pressure." Reilly said after the hearing, "Science really depends on integrity. If you don't have the integrity in the data, you can't generate good policy."

A [Mother Jones](#) (3/6, Julia) report focused on questions surrounding the resignation of USGS scientists "last year after political leadership at the Interior Department requested early access to data on oil and gas deposits in Alaska." Sen. Maria Cantwell, the top Democrat on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, "asked Reilly about the controversy." Reilly responded "that he didn't know the details surrounding the departures" of the scientists, "but he suggested that it might sometimes be appropriate for USGS scientists to share sensitive data with officials leading the Interior Department." He said, "In my other occupations up to this point, I always felt like I had a responsibility to deliver information to my leadership, particularly if it had an impact on how the leadership is supposed to respond to it." He added that "if someone within USGS was uncomfortable with such a request in the future, that person would be able to come to him to discuss those concerns." Reilly also said "that if he was ever faced with political pressure to alter scientific findings, he would 'politely decline.'"

Additional coverage was provided by [Science Magazine](#) (3/6, Doyle) and the [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (3/6, Ruskin).

### **Additional Reading.**

- *A Theory Of A "Mega-Tsunami" That Wipes Out The East Coast Was Widely Debunked. Yet It Persists.* [Hampton Roads \(VA\) Virginian-Pilot](#) (3/6, Tolliver).

## **Opinion Pieces**

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### **Zinke's U-Turn Puts Oil And Gas Industry On Edge.**

A [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Grandoni) "Energy 202" analysis of the Bureau of Land Management's Monday decision to remove "about 17,300 acres of land in central Montana from an upcoming oil and natural gas lease auction, just a week before the scheduled sale" suggests the move represents "the latest whipsaw in Interior's oil and gas policy as officials push to auction off a slew of leases near protected areas in the West." According to the Post, "Environmentalists derided the changes of heart as made for reality TV" even as oil and gas industry representatives "worry about having the certainty they need to pursue projects on public lands at a time when the Trump administration wants to rev up fossil-fuel development as part of its 'energy dominance' agenda."

### **Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke Fighting For Us.**

[AmmoLand](#) (3/6) reports that the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action marked Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's one year anniversary as Secretary of the Interior and applauded "his numerous accomplishments." Chris W. Cox, NRA-ILA executive director, said, "On day one Secretary Zinke hit the ground running by lifting the last administration's ban on traditional ammunition – and he hasn't slowed down since. He's expanded hunting and fishing opportunities on federal lands, forged new efforts to encourage veteran hunting and fishing, and recently announced the department's prioritization of big game corridors to improve wildlife habitat. Secretary Zinke is fighting for us – America's hunters – each and every day."

### **St. John Needs A New Public School.**

In an op-ed for the [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (3/6, Ellis), Catherine Ellis writes that Hurricane Irma "caused horrendous damage to St. John's buildings," including Sprauve School. Ellis argues that recovery money from the federal government should go toward a new school for St. John.

### **Additional Coverage.**

- *Killing For Sport.* [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Telnaes).
- *What Westerners Take For Granted.* [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (3/6, Couch).
- *North Carolina's Red Wolf Is Again On The Verge Of Disappearing From The Wild.* [Asheville \(NC\)](#)

## Top National News

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### **Amid GOP Opposition, Trump Reiterates He Will Levy Tariffs On Steel, Aluminum Imports.**

In a White House press conference with Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, the President yesterday reiterated his intention to impose tariffs on steel and aluminum. The media coverage highlights the strong and vocal opposition to the move on the part of Republican leaders in Congress. Also getting media play is Trump's stated rationale for his decision. [Bloomberg News](#) (3/6, Mohsin, Jacobs, Edgerton) reports the President dismissed "concerns about a global trade war" and said "the US has suffered from poor trading conditions with other nations, including those in the European Union." Said Trump, "When we're behind every single country, trade wars aren't so bad. ... The trade war hurts them, not us."

The [AP](#) (3/6, Thomas, Mascaro) quotes Trump as saying, "We're doing tariffs on steel. We cannot lose our steel industry. It's a fraction of what it once was. And we can't lose our aluminum industry." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6, Ballhaus, Radnofsky) reports the President went on to say, "If a country doesn't have steel, it doesn't have a country. ... This is more than just pure economics. This is about defense. This is about the country itself." [Breitbart](#) (3/6, Key) notes, meanwhile, that Trump also "said his tariffs on steel and aluminum would be implemented in a 'very loving way.'"

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/6, Mohsin, Jacobs, Edgerton) reports Trump "spoke just hours after his Treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin, sought to offer assurances during congressional testimony that the US didn't want to start a trade war." The [AP](#) (3/6, Thomas, Mascaro) notes Mnuchin "told lawmakers Trump was trying to balance protections for beleaguered steel and aluminum producers while 'making sure that we don't do undue harm to the economy.'" The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6, Davidson) quotes Mnuchin as saying, "We are not looking to get into trade wars. ... We are looking to make sure US companies can compete fairly around the world."

[Reuters](#) (3/6, Cornwell, Gomez) reports GOP lawmakers "stepped up calls on Tuesday for... Trump to pull back from proposed tariffs," as Senate Majority Leader McConnell "added to an avalanche of criticism" and Speaker Ryan "returned to the attack on Tuesday, saying the proposed duties of 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminum were too broad." Ryan, "whose home state of Wisconsin could be hit by proposed counter-tariffs from the European Union, has consistently opposed the tariffs and called for 'more surgical and more targeted measures.'" [Roll Call](#) (3/6, McPherson) quotes Ryan as saying, "There is clearly abuse occurring; clearly there is overcapacity, dumping and transshipping of steel and aluminum by some countries, particularly China. ... But I think the smarter way to go is to make it more surgical and more targeted." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/6, Decker), meanwhile, notes that McConnell, "who has repeatedly talked to the president since his surprise declaration last week, said that Republican senators are worried 'about interfering with what appears to be an economy taking off.'" Said the Kentucky senator, "We are urging caution that this [not] develop into something much more dramatic that could send the economy in the wrong direction."

The dispute with Trump, the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/6, Ferrechio) reports, "has some Republicans so worried that they're considering legislation to curtail the power of the president to control trade policy." Sen. Mike Lee "introduced a bill in June that would shift the power to impose trade regulations back to Congress after decades of control by the executive branch." The measure "would require congressional approval of all executive branch trade actions, including tariffs." Now, "in the face of Trump's tariff threat, Lee's bill is suddenly being discussed, and Lee hinted Monday it could be up for discussion." Sen. Ron Johnson said yesterday, "I would certainly support it." GOP leaders, however, said "it's too soon to threaten legislative action." Said Sen. Roy Blunt, "I don't think we are at a point where we need to consider that bill yet."

Dana Milbank, in a [Washington Post](#) (3/6) column titled "Finally, Trump Does Something Republicans Can't Stomach," accuses Republicans of standing by Trump "through all manner of outrage," and looked "the other way when presented with Trump's alleged sexual misconduct, racial provocations, conflicts of interest, cowboy diplomacy and assaults on the rule of law. But slapping a tariff on foreign metals? That crosses the line."

The [New York Times](#) (3/6, Russell) reports in an analysis that while China "was mentioned only in broad terms when President Trump announced plans to impose tariffs on steel and aluminum imports," it was "a major driver behind the action." Although China "makes large amounts of steel and aluminum, flooding the global market with cheap products," targeting it alone "wouldn't work" because it "sends only a tiny fraction of its output to the United States."

Chinese steel makers serve mostly Asian markets." Thus, the Administration "must go much broader with its tariffs." The Times says that by "taking aim at China's steel makers with broad tariffs, the United States could hurt its trusted allies."

[USA Today](#) (3/6) editorializes that "perhaps Trump was absent from high school history class for the discussion of the infamous Smoot-Hawley Act, signed by Herbert Hoover in 1930 in a disastrous bid to 'protect' the US economy" but which actually made "the Great Depression...even more severe." USA Today adds that "more recently, President George W. Bush imposed steel tariffs as high as 30% in 2002," but they "were gone by the end of 2003." David B. Burritt, president and CEO of US Steel, responds in [USA Today](#) (3/6), arguing that "those opposing...Trump's decision...dangerously ignore the Commerce Department's detailed findings that steel imports threaten our national and economic security." Megan McArdle writes in the [Washington Post](#) (3/6, McArdle) that "steel and aluminum tariffs are not going to devastate household budgets. Nor, as some of the more emotional social media coverage suggested, are they harbingers of economic apocalypse. No, the real risk is to exactly the thing Trump is promising to save: American jobs."

**Trump: If EU Removes "Horrible Barriers" To US Products, "We Can Start Talking" About Tariffs.** [Politico](#) (3/6, Lima) notes it was Trump's "first joint public appearance with the leader of a European Union member since announcing his plan for tariffs on aluminum and steel imports last week." Trump singled out the EU for its trade practices toward the US, stating, "The European Union has been particularly tough on the United States. ... They make it almost impossible for us to do business with them." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6, Ballhaus, Radnofsky) reports the President appeared to suggest his Administration could consider excluding the EU from the tariffs if its trade policies were altered. Said Trump, "If the European Union takes off some of the horrible barriers that make it impossible for our products to go into there, then we can start talking."

[The Hill](#) (3/6, Easley), meanwhile, says "Löfven offered opposition to Trump's face," and said, "I'm convinced that increased tariffs will hurt us all in the long run. ... As a Swede I support the efforts of the European Union to achieve trade with fewer obstacles, as few as possible." [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/6) showed Löfven saying, "I fully understand and respect the president's view that we have to look after his own country. ... That's my task as well. But for me, leading a small country, depending on open trade, the best way for us is to do that with others."

**Mnuchin: Tariffs May Not Apply To NAFTA Nations If Treaty Is Redrafted.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6, Davidson) indicates that Mnuchin – echoing comments from the President the day before – addressed the effect of the tariffs on Mexico and Canada. [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/6) showed Mnuchin saying, "To the extent that we're successful in renegotiating NAFTA, those tariffs won't apply to Mexico and Canada."

[Breitbart](#) (3/6, Carney), meanwhile, reports "Mexico's top trade official threatened Tuesday to retaliate against the US if the Trump administration moves ahead with plans to put tariffs that include Mexico." Said economic minister Ildefonso Guajardo, "There's a list that we are analyzing internally, but we won't make it public, we're going to wait."

**AP Analysis: Steel Industry "Actually Faring Pretty Well."** The [AP](#) (3/6, Wiseman) reports that "the Trump administration has chosen an odd time to offer special protection to the US steel industry," which is "actually faring pretty well: The US steel industry last year earned more than \$2.8 billion, up from \$714 million in 2016 and a loss in 2015, according to the Commerce Department." Moreover, "the industry added more than 8,000 jobs between January 2017 and January 2018." The AP adds that "even before Trump mentioned the tariff last Thursday, the price of the benchmark US-made hot-rolled steel had reached the highest level since May 2011, according to S&P Global Platts. The price surged even higher on the tariff news."

**Stocks Finish Higher.** [Reuters](#) (3/6, Carew) reports "US stocks eked out a small gain on Tuesday after a choppy session as investors worried about the prospects of a trade war due to mixed signals from Washington on whether...Trump would follow through with proposed tariffs." The Dow "rose 9.36 points, or 0.04 percent, to close at 24,884.12, the S&P 500 gained 7.18 points, or 0.26 percent, to 2,728.12 and the Nasdaq Composite added 41.30 points, or 0.56 percent, to 7,372.01."

### **Cohn Resigns White House Post After Losing Internal Debate Over Tariffs.**

Media analyses cast reports that Gary Cohn had decided to leave his job with the Administration as further evidence of a White House in disarray. The coverage indicated, moreover, that Cohn's resignation follows a bruising internal debate over trade, in which he ended up on the losing side.

□ [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/6, story 4, 1:40, Karl) said "Cohn is, or I should say, was, the most widely respected member of the White House staff. He was the one who could stand up and tell the President when he was wrong. His departure...will have repercussions far beyond economic policy here at the White House." The □ [CBS Evening News](#) (3/6, lead story, 2:00, Cordes) reported that "this is a blow" for the White House, and added that "as recently as last Friday, the White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders was insisting to reporters that Cohn would not be stepping down over the President's surprise move on tariffs." □ [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/6, story 3, 2:25, Welker), meanwhile, referred to Cohn as "the latest in a long line of high-profile departures."

The [New York Times](#) (3/6, Kelly) was first with the story, reporting that Cohn is "expected to leave in the coming weeks," and that "White House officials said" he "was leaving on cordial terms with the president and that they planned to continue discussing policy even after his departure." Trump said in a statement to the Times, "Gary has been my chief economic adviser and did a superb job in driving our agenda, helping to deliver historic tax cuts and reforms and unleashing the American economy once again." The Times also reports that "the departure of Mr. Cohn, a free-trade oriented Democrat who fended off a number of nationalist-minded policies during his year in the Trump administration, could have a ripple effect on the president's economic decisions and on the financial sector." The [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Paletta, Rucker) says "in many ways, Cohn's NEC was one of the most stable parts of the White House, avoiding the scandals and revolving-door image that the National Security Council and other offices endured."

Jim Acosta said on □ [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/6), "It has been a chaotic week after chaotic week at this White House. The only thing that stands out is when there is not chaos here at the White House because it happens so rarely. I think when you have the top economic adviser resigning from the White House because the President is about to slap tariffs on US allies like Great Britain and so on, I don't think it is any surprise that Gary Cohn is doing this." Gloria Borger said on □ [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/6) that "a lot of people saw Gary Cohn as one of the people left in the White House who actually understood economic policy and knows how to manage."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Paletta, Dawsey) reports that "establishment figures in Washington," including "national security leaders, top lawmakers, the former president of Goldman Sachs," have "suddenly found themselves in a losing battle with a small posse of Trump advisers who have nurtured the president's long-running skepticism of foreign trade." Their "last-ditch efforts to get Trump to scale back, if not reverse, the tariffs came after a power struggle within the White House where Cohn," Defense Secretary Mattis, "and others routinely tried to dissuade Trump from launching what many fear will be a trade war that could rattle the world's largest economies."

The [New York Times](#) (3/6, Baker) reports that while Cohn "is a Democrat...his resignation...actually underscored the fundamental divide between President Trump and his fellow Republicans as the president seeks to raise barriers to foreign trade." At the White House, he "in effect served as a proxy for the business wing of the Republican Party as it fought what may be a losing battle against new tariffs on steel and aluminum imports." Now "his departure deprives free trade proponents of perhaps their strongest voice inside Mr. Trump's inner circle."

John Roberts said on □ [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/6), "So much for all of the talk that Gary Cohn was going to replace John Kelly as the chief of staff here at the White House. There was also some thought among some people at the White House that as soon as there was a cabinet vacancy, that Gary Cohn could be tapped to replace that person. We are told that Gary Cohn was so well-thought-of here at the White House that he could have filled out a number of different cabinet positions."

[USA Today](#) (3/6, Korte, Jackson) reports Chief of Staff Kelly said Cohn "served with great distinction," and he added, "I will miss having him as a partner in the White House, but he departs having made a real impact in the lives of the American people." Cohn, for his part, "said it was an honor to help 'enact pro-growth economic policies to benefit the American people' and expressed gratitude for the opportunity." He added, "I am grateful to the President for giving me this opportunity and wish him and the Administration great success in the future." [Axios](#) (3/6, Swan) says, however, that Cohn "disagreed with Trump on just about every issue besides tax cuts," and "was, and is, a Democrat." The [AP](#) (3/6) also reports "Trump praised Cohn despite" their "disagreement" on trade, and the [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Paletta, Rucker) reports that "Cohn spent months trying to steer Trump away from tariffs and trade wars," but was "eventually being outmaneuvered by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, trade advisor Peter Navarro, and ultimately Trump himself."



[NPR](#) (3/6, Horsley) reported that it was "not the first time Cohn has come close to quitting." He "nearly resigned last summer, when the president appeared to defend those who marched alongside neo-Nazis and Klansmen in Charlottesville." Moreover, "as a leader of the 'globalist' wing in the White House, Cohn was also overruled when the president announced plans to withdraw the US from the Paris climate accord."

[Reuters](#) (3/6), the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/6, Correll), the [New York Post](#) (3/6, Fredericks), [Townhall](#) (3/6, Pavlich), and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6, Ballhaus, Hoffman), among other news outlets, also report the news. [Bloomberg News](#) (3/6, Sink, Campbell, Pettypiece) says "the dollar slid and an exchange-traded fund linked to US stocks tumbled in after-hours trading on the resignation news. The greenback fell 0.4 percent against the yen, often a haven in turmoil, to 105.66 as of 7:48 a.m. in Tokyo trading. The SPDR S&P 500 ETF trust, linked to the S&P 500 Index of stocks, was down 1.2 percent." [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/6, story 3, 2:25, Welker) showed Eason Javers of CNBC saying, "Short term, this could be a bad news for the stock market. Traders in Wall Street like Gary Cohn. They've got a lot of confidence in him. Long term, this removes one of the architects of Donald Trump's economic success from this Administration. Where they go from here is a real open question."

Eli Lake of Bloomberg View said on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (3/6), "Gary Cohn comes from Goldman Sachs. That is something that is in some ways both left and right and neither left nor right. It represents the center of American politics. This is a significant blow. In some ways, I think it does show a kind of fracture of American politics in a deep way. The fact that so many Republicans in Congress and a lot of Democrats in Congress are really uncomfortable with the tariff policy, and we'll see how far it can go. But the President has a lot of authority here."

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6) bemoans Cohn's departure, arguing the controversy over tariffs has cost the President an essential adviser. The [New York Times](#) (3/6) similarly editorializes that "[i]n an administration filled with people with dubious ideas, limited experience and loads of ethical baggage," Cohn "was supposed to be among the sensible adults in the room. Now, he is leaving after failing repeatedly to be the stabilizing influence that the Trump administration sorely needed."

Rep. Charlie Dent said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (3/6), "There has certainly been, in my view, a lot of dysfunction in the White House. I have used the term 'chaos' to describe the activity in the White House for some time. There has been unusually high turnover, as has been pointed out in many occasions. Now with Gary Cohn leaving, who I think in many respects has been a very constructive force in the White House on tax policy and on trade policy, I think it is a big loss for the White House. Yes, I don't think 'chaos' is too strong a word."

Sen. Chris Coons said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/6), "The idea that Gary Cohn is departing largely over the timing and the deliberation, or the lack thereof, behind the President's abrupt announcement of large tariffs that will distance us from the key trading partners and close allies is just a reminder that his love of conflict has real consequences. Dow futures for tomorrow are already down 300 points. The President loves to take credit when the Dow goes up. I wonder if he will take any of the responsibility with the Dow likely going down with Gary Cohn's abrupt departure."

***Axios' Swan: Trump Canceled Meeting Called By Cohn To Press Him On Tariffs Decision.***

[Business Insider](#) (3/6, Bryan) reports Cohn "attempted to set up a last-ditch effort to get Trump to soften the tariffs by arranging a meeting with business executives who would be hurt by the new tariffs, which function as a tax on imports." Axios' Jonathan Swan, however, wrote on [Twitter](#) that he was "told Trump had cancelled the last-ditch meeting Gary had arranged on Thursday with the downstream steel and aluminum companies."

***Trump Wants To Consider Kudlow To Replace Cohn.*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Paletta, Rucker) reports Trump "could cast a wide net in searching for a replacement" for Cohn, "though he has told advisers that he wants to consider Larry Kudlow, a media personality and 2016 campaign adviser, according to several people briefed on Trump's discussions."

***Earlier Yesterday, Trump Touted "Tremendous Energy" At White House, Predicted More Departures.*** The [AP](#) (3/6, Miller, Lemire) reports that ahead of Cohn's announcement, the President "denied Tuesday that his White House is chaotic, but predicted more staff will leave, as allies and observers worry about West Wing brain drain." Trump "maintained that his White House has 'tremendous energy,' but multiple White House officials said Trump has been pushing anxious aides to stay." Trump "acknowledged that he is a tough boss to work for, saying he enjoys watching his closest aides fight over policy." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/6, story 3, 1:45, Karl) showed Trump saying, "I like conflict. I like having two people with different points of view. And I certainly have that. And then I make a decision. But I like watching it. I like seeing it

and I think it is the best way to go.” Of his staff, Trump also said, “They all want to be in the White House. So many people want to come in. I have a choice of anybody. I can take any position in the White House, and I’ll have a choice of the ten top people having to do with that position.”

The President also [tweeted](#), “The new Fake News narrative is that there is CHAOS in the White House. Wrong! People will always come & go, and I want strong dialogue before making a final decision. I still have some people that I want to change (always seeking perfection). There is no Chaos, only great Energy!” The [New York Times](#) (3/6, Sullivan) reports that the tweet “was an odd defense for a man who has thrived on chaos and has used it as a way to both organize people and manage them.” [Politico](#) (3/6, Nelson) points out that Trump “even joked about the chaos at Saturday’s annual Gridiron Club dinner, joking: ‘So many people have been leaving the White House. It’s invigorating, since you want turnover. I like chaos. It really is good. Who’s going to be the next to leave?’”

Amy Walter of the Cook Political Report said on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (3/6), “I think that the chaos is part of the strategy. It’s not a bug in the system. It is the system. This is where the President feels the most comfortable, being in a situation where it looks as if there is no order, and he seems to be the most comfortable in that. But a lot of people, that’s not how they like to work, and it is also a very difficult way to push strategy.”

### **Trump Takes Credit For Apparent North Korea’s Willingness To Negotiate Giving Up Nukes.**

Media reports cast President Trump as cautiously optimistic amid reports from Seoul on Tuesday that North Korea is willing to halt its nuclear and missile tests and engage in disarmament talks with the US. The President pointed to tough, new international sanctions imposed on Pyongyang, as well as his hard line toward North Korea, as the reason for its change of heart.

Calling it a “major development,” the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/6, story 2, 3:30, Glor) reported Trump “expressed cautious optimism about North Korea’s apparent willingness to negotiate,” saying, “We’re going to see. They seem to be acting positively. I think that their statement and the statements coming out of South Korea and North Korea have been very positive. That would be a great thing for the world, great thing for the world. So we’ll see how it all comes about.” Asked later at a press conference why he thought Kim Jong-Un “may have had a change of heart,” Trump said, “I think that they are sincere, but I think they’re sincere, also, because the sanctions and what we’re doing with respect to North Korea, including the great help that we’ve been given from China, and they can do more. But the sanctions have been have, very strong and very biting.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/6, Kong, Lee, Syeed) reports Trump told reporters that “his tough stance was responsible for Kim’s willingness to talk, joking the overture should be credited to ‘me.’” The [Daily Caller](#) (3/6, Enjeti) also reports the President’s “me” comment, and [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/6, story 4, 2:20, Holt) said the President is “crediting his hard-line against North Korea for the conditions that led to the successful Olympics.” Trump was shown saying: “We had a lot to do with that, if not, everything, we had a lot to do with it. ... Let’s see if we can carry it over.” [Politico](#) (3/6, Lima) likewise says Trump credited tough new sanctions, while [Breitbart](#) (3/6, Spiering) says he also recalled that South Korean President Moon Jae-in “gave him credit for the successful talks between North and South Korea.”

The [Washington Times](#) (3/6, Miller) says Trump “welcomed the turn of events with a note of caution,” and the [AP](#) (3/6, Superville, Pennington) that a “cautious...Trump spoke of possible progress,” but warned it could also be “false hope.” Early Tuesday, Trump [tweeted](#), “Possible progress being made in talks with North Korea. For the first time in many years, a serious effort is being made by all parties concerned. The World is watching and waiting! May be false hope, but the US is ready to go hard in either direction!” [USA Today](#) (3/6, Onyanga-Omara, Michaels) reports that in “another [tweet](#) Tuesday accompanying a link to a Drudge Report [article](#) that Kim was hosting the delegation from Seoul,” Trump wrote: “We will see what happens!”

The [New York Times](#) (3/6, Choe, Landler) reports Trump reacted early Tuesday morning on Twitter “with guarded optimism to the news,” but “expounded on his reaction later to reporters during an Oval Office meeting with Prime Minister Stefan Lofven of Sweden,” saying, “We have come certainly a long way, at least rhetorically, with North Korea. The statements coming out of South Korea and North Korea have been very positive. That would be a great thing for the world.” Asked if he would meet with Kim, Trump said, “We’ll see what happens.” [Reuters](#) (3/5, Mason, Kim) reports Trump “declined to say whether he had any preconditions for talks with Pyongyang,” but a senior Administration official said, “We are open minded, we look forward to hearing more.



But...the North Koreans have earned our skepticism, so we're a bit guarded in our optimism."

[USA Today](#) (3/6, Korte, Jackson) reports Trump "declined to say whether he would establish preconditions for talks with North Korea," and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6, Cheng, Bender, Jeong) says Administration officials stopped short of committing to talks with Pyongyang. [The Hill](#) (3/6, Fabian) reports Vice President Pence, however, said in a statement Tuesday that "all options are on the table and our posture toward the regime will not change until we see credible, verifiable, and concrete steps toward denuclearization."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/6, story 7, 1:40, Muir) said the "major development...came after a very rare meeting between Kim Jong-Un and South Korean officials" in Pyongyang. Afterwards, Seoul said the North "offered to stop testing weapons if the US agrees to talks." While the President appeared to be somewhat optimistic, the US intelligence community "weighed in on this today, basically saying they are deeply skeptical, noting that North Korea has a 60-year long track record of breaking promises." Margaret Brennan similarly said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/6, story 3, 1:20, Glor) that while "this is the clearest diplomatic outreach we have seen so far...the Administration remains skeptical, not only because the North has a pattern of breaking past agreements, but also because they question whether US ally South Korea may be overeager for the US to begin these talks."

The [AP](#) (3/6, Kim, Burns) reports that a "senior South Korean presidential adviser" said Tuesday that Kim had agreed to meet with South Korean President Moon Jae-in "at a border village in late April." The [Washington Post](#) (3/6, Fifield), however, reports that North Korea "did not confirm South Korea's version of events," saying simply that the two sides "made a satisfactory agreement" during the meeting.

[Reuters](#) (3/6, Lambert) reports the State Department said Tuesday that the US and South Korea "are discussing holding a meeting later this week about potential denuclearization talks with North Korea." According to the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/6, Parsons), Kim's "apparent offer stunned many regional security experts and analysts in Washington."

A [New York Times](#) (3/6, Landler) analysis says a breakthrough is unlikely, noting that "diplomacy between the United States and North Korea has gone through familiar cycles of long stagnation, followed by brief bursts of hope and then inevitable disappointment, typically after North Korea reneged." A second [New York Times](#) (3/6, Landler, Sanger) analysis says that while Trump "has vowed not to repeat what he regarded as the cardinal error of his predecessors in dealing with North Korea," he now faces "a prospect uncannily similar to that confronted by Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama."

A [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6) editorial is skeptical that North Korea is prepared to make any real concessions, and urges that any deal with Pyongyang must be structured so that it is rewarded only after it denuclearizes and allows unlimited inspections.

*WPost: Trump's "Maximum Pressure" On North Korea "Is Working."* A [Washington Post](#) (3/6) editorial says that if confirmed by Pyongyang, "the shift of position would mark a success for the Trump administration's policy of applying 'maximum pressure' to North Korea and open the possibility of a needed reduction of tensions on the Korean Peninsula." The question, it says, "is whether President Trump is prepared to capitalize on the opportunity." According to the Post, it is "not clear whether the Trump administration is ready for this diplomatic challenge," but a "good first step in response to Tuesday's developments would be for Mr. Trump to fill" the empty positions at the State Department in the region "with seasoned experts," and then "set them to work devising a serious and pragmatic strategy for engaging with the Kim regime — without sacrificing, for now, 'maximum pressure.'"

The [New York Times](#) (3/6) similarly editorializes that the Administration "has been loath to enter into negotiations that would have a similar fate" as its predecessors, and "there is no evidence of the United States having any mechanism to implement a strategy for talks. There is no American ambassador in Seoul, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has so eviscerated the State Department that he may not be capable of effectively moving forward. Joseph Yun, the chief American envoy to North Korea and the one senior person who actually knows the portfolio and has met with North Koreans, retired last week, a decision that can only be interpreted as a further sign of the administration's inept handling of the issue."

*US Sanctions North Korea Over Use Of Nerve Agent In Assassination.* The [New York Times](#) (3/6, Gladstone) reports the State Department said Tuesday that the US has imposed new sanctions on North Korea for ordering the assassination last year of leader Kim Jong-Un's estranged half brother with a banned nerve agent. Kim Jong-nam was killed Feb. 13, 2017, with VX, "a deadly nerve agent used in prohibited chemical weapons of mass destruction that North Korea is known to have stockpiled." The State Department said that the US had formally

determined that "North Korea was responsible and that the sanctions took effect on Monday."

***NYTimes Analysis: Trump's Trade Plan Threatens To Derail Korean Talks.*** The [New York Times](#) (3/6, Swanson) reports that President Trump's plan to impose stiff steel tariffs would "severely punish South Korea...at a moment when America is embarking on a series of high-stakes negotiations to defuse tensions on the Korean Peninsula." If talks materialize, the US "will need the close partnership of South Korea," but the Times says the Administration in recent months has "alienated the South's leaders by initiating a series of tough trade measures that seek to penalize the country for exporting more goods to the United States than it imports."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

***"Gary Cohn's Exit Won't Make This Administration Any Better."*** The [New York Times](#) (3/6) editorializes that "in an administration filled with people with dubious ideas, limited experience and loads of ethical baggage," Gary Cohn "was supposed to be among the sensible adults in the room. Now, he is leaving after failing repeatedly to be the stabilizing influence that the Trump administration sorely needed."

***"Famine Stalks South Sudan."*** The [New York Times](#) (3/6) editorializes that the United States should press the UN Security Council for an arms embargo for South Sudan, particularly given the "special responsibility" the US bears for the country's dreadful state. The editors also argue that European donors and the African Union should join US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley in letting the leaders of the two sides in South Sudan's current conflict "know that they are far too big a part of the problem to ever become part of the solution."

***"North Korea Has Put The Ball In Trump's Court."*** The [New York Times](#) (3/6) editorializes that the Administration "has been loath to enter into negotiations that would have a similar fate" as its predecessors, and "there is no evidence of the United States having any mechanism to implement a strategy for talks. There is no American ambassador in Seoul, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has so eviscerated the State Department that he may not be capable of effectively moving forward. Joseph Yun, the chief American envoy to North Korea and the one senior person who actually knows the portfolio and has met with North Koreans, retired last week, a decision that can only be interpreted as a further sign of the administration's inept handling of the issue."

### Washington Post.

***"Trump's 'Maximum Pressure' On North Korea Is Working. Now What?"*** A [Washington Post](#) (3/6) editorial says that if confirmed by Pyongyang, North Korea's "shift of position would mark a success for the Trump administration's policy of applying 'maximum pressure' to North Korea and open the possibility of a needed reduction of tensions on the Korean Peninsula." The question, it says, "is whether President Trump is prepared to capitalize on the opportunity." According to the Post, it is "not clear whether the Trump administration is ready for this diplomatic challenge," but a "good first step in response to Tuesday's developments would be for Mr. Trump to fill" the empty positions at the State Department in the region "with seasoned experts," and then "set them to work devising a serious and pragmatic strategy for engaging with the Kim regime — without sacrificing, for now, 'maximum pressure.'"

***"The Public Has Spoken On Gun Control. Don't Wait For The White House."*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/6) says in an editorial that instead of "trying to decipher signals from a president who changes his mind by the hour, lawmakers should listen to the public they are elected to represent." The public's message "has been clear: It's time to end the decades-long stalemate on gun control and enact laws to keep guns from falling into the wrong hands." The Post cites a Politico-Morning Consult poll which "showed that 88 percent of Americans now support universal background checks, 81 percent think a person should be at least 21 to buy a gun, 70 percent favor a ban on high-capacity magazines and 68 percent think assault-style weapons should be banned," and argues that if lawmakers "ignore the public's clamor for reasonable gun-control legislation, voters should use the upcoming midterm elections to reiterate the message."

***"Who Knew About The Improper Transfer Of The DC School Chancellor's Daughter?"*** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/6) calls it "striking" that former DC Public Schools chancellor Antwan Wilson claims "that he did nothing wrong when his daughter bypassed the system's competitive lottery to transfer to one of the city's most desirable high schools — even though the transfer violated a rule that Mr. Wilson himself had promulgated only months before." The Post adds that Wilson's claim that DC Mayor Muriel Bowser "knew and had no objections to plans to

transfer his daughter from Duke Ellington School for the Arts, where she was unhappy, must be investigated.” Noting that Bowser denies the claim, the Post says her “credibility [is] under challenge in an election year,” and urges DC Inspector General Daniel W. Lucas, who is investigating the matter, to give it “top priority” and “report to the public as expeditiously as possible.”

### **Wall Street Journal.**

**“North Korea’s Negotiation Play.”** A [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6) editorial is skeptical that North Korea is prepared to make any real concessions, and urges that any deal with Pyongyang must be structured so that it is rewarded only after it denuclearizes and allows unlimited inspections.

**“The Cohn Departure.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6) bemoans Gary Cohn’s departure from the White House, arguing the controversy over tariffs has cost the President an essential adviser.

**“California’s Water Hole.”** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/6) criticizes the California Water Commission for trying to avoid providing the necessary funding for several approved water conservation projects, including projects to expand storage and improve flood control. The Journal says the reluctance is being driven by environmentalists who oppose dams on principle, and that storms hitting the state will cause large amounts of wasted water without the projects.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Gary Cohn Resigns As White House Economic Adviser After Losing Tariffs Fight](#)  
[Trump Administration Praises North Korean Overture, But Remains Wary](#)  
[The New ID Theft: Millions Of Credit Applicants Who Don’t Exist](#)  
[CVS Bets Big With \\$40 Billion Bond Sale](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[Raising Hopes, North Korea Offers To Talk On Nuclear Arsenal](#)  
[Gary Cohn, Top Economic Aide, To Resign Amid Tariff Dispute](#)  
[US-China Rivalry Is, More Than Ever, A Fight Over Tech](#)  
[Adviser To Emirates Is Cooperating With Special Counsel](#)  
[In Russian Ex-Spy’s Poisoning, An Echo Of The Cold War](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[N. Korean Overture Is “Sincere,” Trump Says](#)  
[Leaving Their Hearts Behind In Puerto Rico](#)  
[Spy Drama In Britain Has Eyes Turning Toward Russia](#)  
[Crackdown On Truancy Imperils Graduations](#)  
[Justice Dept. Sues California On “Sanctuary” Laws](#)  
[Foe Of Tariffs To Quit Post](#)

#### **Financial Times:**

[CVS Jumbo Bond Attracts Record \\$121bn In Book Orders](#)  
[North Korea Says It Is “Open To Ending Nuclear Programme”](#)  
[Poroshenko Fends Off IMF Demands For Anti-Corruption Court](#)  
[US Security Committee Warns On Broadcom Takeover Of Qualcomm](#)

#### **Washington Times:**

[Trump Takes Credit For Kim Jong-Un’s Sudden Shift On Talks](#)  
[Justice Department Suing California Over Sanctuary Laws](#)  
[Victory ‘Is Not Possible’ — Pakistani Official Implores U.S. To End War With Afghan Taliban](#)  
[ER Visits For Opioid Overdoses Up 30 Percent In One Year](#)  
[Christopher Steele Knew Democrats Funding Trump Dossier Before FBI Sought FISA Warrant](#)  
[Betsy DeVos Pressed To Toss Obama’s Lenient School-Discipline Directive](#)

### **Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:**

**ABC:** Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Gary Cohn Resignation; WH-Russia Meddling; Pittsburgh Train Crash; UK-Ex-Russian Spy; North-South Korea Relations; USA Gymnastics Sex Abuse; Big Game Trophies Ban; Nashville Mayor Resignation; Dayton-Traffic Accident; WV-Teachers Strike; Asteroid Flyby; Child Portrait; Sunken WWII Warship.

**CBS:** Gary Cohn Resignation; WH-North-South Korea Relations; North-South Korea Relations; Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Opioid Crisis; Congo-Child Labor; WV-Teachers Strike; Nashville Mayor Resignation; Flying Car; Presidential History.

**NBC:** Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Gary Cohn Resignation; North-South Korea Relations; Nashville Mayor Resignation; WV-Teachers Strike; Plastic Ocean Pollution; Vaping Safety Warning; Child Portrait; McDonald's Fresh Meat; Message Bottle; Children Show Streaming.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

Severe Weather – 9 minutes, 30 seconds

North-South Korea Relations – 8 minutes, 50 seconds

Gary Cohn Resignation – 6 minutes, 10 seconds

Nashville Mayor Resignation – 3 minutes, 55 seconds

WV-Teachers Strike – 2 minutes, 40 seconds

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Gary Cohn Resignation; Stormy Daniels-Trump Relationship; DOJ-Sanctuary Cities; Severe Weather; Playboy Mension; Wall Street News.

**CBS:** DOJ-Sanctuary Cities; Gary Cohn Resignation; Stormy Daniels-Trump Relationship; Opioid Epidemic; Severe Weather; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Gary Cohn Resignation; WH-Tariff Policy; Stormy Daniels-Trump Relationship.

**NPR:** Gary Cohn Resignation; DOJ-Sanctuary Cities; WH-North-South Korea Relations; Severe Weather; Wall Street News.

## **Washington Schedule**

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### **Today's Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Delivers remarks at the Latino Coalition Legislative Summit.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Attends America First Policies event on the tax bill.

**US Senate:** 9:30 AM Senate Intelligence Committee hearing on security clearance reform – Hearing on 'Security Clearance Reform', with testimony from ManTech President and CEO Kevin Phillips; Raytheon Vice President for Intelligence, Information, and Services Jane Chappell; Government Accountability Office's Brenda Farrell; Professional Services Council President David Berteau; National Background Investigation Bureau Director Charlie Phalen; National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC) Assistant Director for Security Brian Dunbar; Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence Director for Defense Intelligence and Security Garry Reid; and Defense Security Service Director Dan Payne \* Last month, the White House discontinued all interim Top Secret and Sensitive Compartmented Information-level security clearances for individuals whose investigations or adjudications have been pending since 1 Jun or before, including President Donald Trump's Senior Adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 106, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

10:00 AM House / Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets group – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on 'Legislative Presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States', with testimony from VFW National Commander in Chief Keith Harman, National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci, Washington Office Executive Director Bob Wallace, National Legislative Service Director Carlos Fuentes, and National Legislative Committee Chairman Richard Morrison Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

10:00 AM Senate Judiciary Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers John Nalbandian to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit; Kari Dooley to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Connecticut; Dominic Lanza to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona; Jill Aiko Otake to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Hawaii; and Joseph Hunt to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Business Meeting

continues – Business Meeting continues, with agenda including consideration of nomination of Michael Atkinson to be Intelligence Community Inspector General, as well as 'H.R. 2825, Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act' \* Hearing began 28 Feb Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 342, Washington, DC <http://hsgac.senate.gov/>  
<https://twitter.com/SenateHSGAC>

10:30 AM Interior Secretary Zinke and GOP senators discuss the National Park Restoration Act – Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke and Republican Sens. Lamar Alexander, Steve Daines, and Cory Gardner discuss the introduction of the 'National Park Restoration Act', via press conference \* The bill is designed to help restore and rebuild national parks by using revenues from energy production on federal lands to help pay for the \$11 billion National Park maintenance backlog, including roads, buildings, campgrounds, trails, and water systems Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC [alexander.senate.gov](http://alexander.senate.gov)  
<https://twitter.com/SenAlexander>

10:30 AM Senate Budget Committee hearing on DoD audit and business operations reform – Hearing on 'Department of Defense Audit and Business Operations Reform at the Pentagon', with testimony from Under Secretary of Defense and DoD Comptroller and CFO David Norquist; and DoD Chief Management Officer John Gibson II Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 608, Washington, DC <http://budget.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SenateBudget>

1:00 PM Senate Aging Committee hearing on scams – Hearing on 'Stopping Senior Scams', with testimony from scam victims Stephen and Rita Shiman; AARP Washington State Director Doug Shadel; AARP Pennsylvania Consumer Issues Task Force Chair Mary Bach; and Stop Senior Scams Acting Program founder Adrienne Omansky Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 562, Washington, DC <http://aging.senate.gov/>

2:00 PM Hearing on 'The Economic Report of the President', with testimony from Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Kevin Hassett Location: Hart Senate Office Building, Rm 216, Washington, DC [www.jec.senate.gov](http://www.jec.senate.gov) <https://twitter.com/JointEconCmte>

2:30 PM Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing on small business bankruptcy – Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts Subcommittee hearing on 'Small Business Bankruptcy: Assessing the System', with testimony from Bernstein, Shur, Sawyer & Nelson Co-Chair Robert Keach; Brooklyn Law School Professor Edward Janger; and Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr partner Craig Goldblatt Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

2:30 PM Senate Foreign Relations Committee nominations hearing – Nominations hearing considers Joseph Macmanus to be U.S. Ambassador to Colombia; Marie Royce to be Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs; Robin Bernstein to be U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic; and Edward Charles Prado to be U.S. Ambassador to Argentina Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 419, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

4:00 PM Senate Democrats hearing on protecting children from gun violence – 'America Speaks Out: Protecting Our Children from Gun Violence' Senate Democrats hearing, co-hosted by Sens. Debbie Stabenow and Bill Nelson, with testimony from survivors of gun violence and family members who want Congress to take swift action to strengthen the nation's gun laws, including 17-year old Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School student David Hogg; Fredd Guttenberg – the father of 14-year-old Jaime Guttenberg, who was killed at Stoneman Douglas; Francine Wheeler – the mother of six-year-old Ben Wheeler, who was killed at Sandy Hook; Lori Haas – the mother of a survivor of the Virginia Tech shooting; Kim Bose – the mother of 20-year-old Joseph Bose, killed by gun violence in 2015; Prince George's County Police Chief Hank Stawinski; high school student and gun violence prevention activist Eva Jones; teacher Katrina Kickbush; and Democratic Sens. Stabenow, Nelson, Dick Durbin, Amy Klobuchar, Jeff Merkley, Ron Wyden, Tim Kaine, Chris Murphy, Chris Van Hollen, Catherine Cortez-Masto, and Patty Murray Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, SVC-203, Washington, DC [dpcc.senate.gov](http://dpcc.senate.gov)

HELP Committee Executive Session – Executive Session, with agenda including nominations of John Ring to be a National Labor Relations Board member; Frank Brogan to be Assistant Secretary of Education for Elementary and Secondary Education; Dr Mark Schneider to be Institute of Education Science Director; and Marco Rajkovich to be a Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission member Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC  
<http://help.senate.gov/>

IACLEA Capitol Hill Day – International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators Capitol Hill Day, meeting Members of Congress to discuss issues of public safety at higher education institutions Location: Washington, DC [www.iaclea.org](http://www.iaclea.org)

**US House:** 10:00 AM House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on the State Insurance Regulation Preservation Act – Housing and Insurance Subcommittee hearing on 'Legislative

Review of H.R. 5059, the State Insurance Regulation Preservation Act', with testimony from Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company Chief Strategist and Risk Officer Michael Mahaffey; COUNTRY Financial CEO Kurt Bock (on behalf of Property Casualty Insurers Association of America); and University of Minnesota Law School Professor Daniel Schwarcz Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

10:00 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on retail and emerging tech – Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee hearing on 'Review of Emerging Tech's Impact on Retail Operations and Logistics', with testimony from Hel's Kitchen founder David Borris; Medici Ventures President Jonathan Johnson; Casestack founder, President, and CEO Dan Sanker; and Convey Logistics CEO Rob Taylor Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2123, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM House / Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees hear legislative presentation from vets group – House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs joint hearing on 'Legislative Presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States', with testimony from VFW National Commander in Chief Keith Harman, National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci, Washington Office Executive Director Bob Wallace, National Legislative Service Director Carlos Fuentes, and National Legislative Committee Chairman Richard Morrison Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

10:00 AM CFTC Chairman Giancarlo testifies to House Appropriations subcommittee hearing on budget – Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee 'FY19 Budget Hearing – Commodity Futures Trading Commission', with testimony from CFTC Chairman Chris Giancarlo Location: Rm 2362-A, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://appropriations.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseAppropsGOP>

10:00 AM House Appropriations Committee hearing on U.S. Navy and Marine Corps budget – Defense Subcommittee 'FY19 Budget Hearing – Navy and Marine Corps', with testimony from Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer; U.S. Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller; and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson Location: U.S. Capitol, H-140, Washington, DC <http://appropriations.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseAppropsGOP>

10:00 AM House Armed Services Committee hearing on defense acquisition reform – Hearing on 'Assessing Military Service Acquisition Reform', with testimony from Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology Dr Bruce Jette; Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition James Geurts; and Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition Dr William Roper Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

10:00 AM Social Security Subcommittee hearing on 'Lacking a Leader: Challenges Facing the SSA After Over 5 Years of Acting Commissioners' Location: Rm 1100, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/WaysandMeansGOP>

10:00 AM House Space subcommittee hearing on FY'19 NASA budget – Space Subcommittee hearing on 'An Overview of the NASA Budget for Fiscal Year 2019', with testimony from NASA Acting Administrator Robert Lightfoot Jr. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2318, Washington, DC <http://science.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HouseScience>

10:00 AM House Transportation subcommittee hearing on long-term funding for highways and transit programs – Highways and Transit Subcommittee hearing on 'Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Long-Term Funding for Highways and Transit Programs', with testimony from Tennessee Department of Transportation Commissioner John Schroer (on behalf of American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials); Colorado Department of Transportation Executive Director Michael Lewis (on behalf of Western Road Use Charge Consortium); American Trucking Associations President and CEO Chris Spear; U.S. Chamber of Commerce Executive Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Ed Mortimer; and Economic Policy Institute President Thea Lee Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2167, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM Markup hearing on 'H.R. 2152, the Citizens' Right to Know Act of 2017' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2141, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseJudiciary>

10:15 AM House Natural Resources Committee markup hearing – Markup hearing on 'H.R. 520, National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act', 'H.R. 4731, To extend the retained use estate for the Caneel Bay resort in St. John, United States Virgin Islands, and for other purposes', and 'H.R. 5133, Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act Reauthorization of 2018'

Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1324, Washington, DC

<http://naturalresources.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/NatResources>

10:15 AM Environment Subcommittee hearing on 'The Future of Transportation Fuels and Vehicles' Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2322, Washington, DC

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:30 AM House Budget Committee continues series of hearings on oversight of the CBO – Hearing on 'CBO Oversight: Member Day', with testimony from Members of Congress \* Continues a series of five hearings on the CBO Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1334, Washington, DC <http://budget.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/housebudgetgop>

10:30 AM House Homeland Security Committee markup hearing – Markup hearing on 'H.R. 4176, the Air Cargo Security Improvement Act of 2017', 'H.R. 4227, the Vehicular Terrorism Prevention Act of 2017', 'H.R. 4467, the Strengthening Aviation Security Act of 2017', 'H.R. 4627, the Shielding Public Spaces from Vehicular Terrorism Act', 'H.R. 5074, the DHS Cyber Incident Response Teams Act', 'H.R. 5079, the DHS Field Engagement Accountability Act', 'H.R. 5081, the Surface Transportation Security and Technology Accountability Act of 2018', 'H.R. 5089, the Strengthening Local Transportation Security Capabilities Act of 2018', 'H.R. 5094, the Enhancing Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative Act', 'H.R. 5099, the Enhancing DHS' Fusion Center Technical Assistance Program', and 'H.R. 5131, the Surface Transportation Security Improvement Act of 2018' Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-210, Washington, DC [homeland.house.gov](http://homeland.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland>

11:00 AM House Small Business Committee hearing on regulatory reform – Hearing on 'Regulatory Reform and Rollback: The Effects on Small Businesses', with testimony from NFIB Small Business Legal Center Executive Director Karen Harned; National Association of Manufacturers Vice President for Labor, Legal & Regulatory Policy Patrick Hedren; National Association of Home Builders Chairman Randy Noel; and Georgetown Law Professor Lisa Heinzerling Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

12:00 PM House debates BRICK Act – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including 'H.R. 1917 – Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2017' Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

1:00 PM House Administration Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including 'Committee Resolution 115-9: A Committee Resolution to allocate funds from the reserve fund' Location: Longworth House Office Building, Rm 1310, Washington, DC <http://cha.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseAdmnGOP>

2:00 PM House Homeland Security subcommittees joint hearing on DHS cybersecurity workforce – Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection Subcommittee and Oversight and Management Efficiency Subcommittee joint hearing on 'Examining DHS' Efforts to Strengthen its Cybersecurity Workforce' Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, HVC-210, Washington, DC [homeland.house.gov](http://homeland.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland>

2:00 PM House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on China in Africa – Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations Subcommittee hearing on 'China in Africa: The New Colonialism?', with testimony from 'The Coming Collapse of China' author Gordon Chang; Heritage Foundation Senior Policy Analyst for Africa and the Middle East Joshua Meserve; Center for Global Development Senior Fellow Scott Morris; and Howard University Department of African Studies Assistant Professor Dr Anita Plummer Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2172, Washington, DC <http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACrepublicans>

2:00 PM House Transportation subcommittee hearing on implementation of USCG programs – Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee hearing on 'Implementation of Coast Guard Programs', with testimony from U.S. Coast Guard Deputy Commandant for Operations, Policy, and Capabilities Rear Adm. Linda Fagan; and Government Accountability Office Acting Director of Homeland Security and Justice Nathan Anderson Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2167, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

2:00 PM Hearing on 'The Economic Report of the President', with testimony from Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Kevin Hassett Location: Hart Senate Office Building, Rm 216, Washington, DC [www.jec.senate.gov](http://www.jec.senate.gov) <https://twitter.com/JointEconCmte>

2:00 PM House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program – Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee hearing on 'The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Lightning II Program', with testimony from F-35 Joint Program Office Program Executive Officer Vice Adm. Mathias Winter; U.S. Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Aviation Lt. Gen.



Steven Rudder; U.S. Navy Director of Air Warfare (OPNAV N98) Rear Adm. Scott Conn; and U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Programs, and Requirements Lt. Gen. Jerry Harris  
Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2212, Washington, DC  
[www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

2:00 PM House Oversight subcommittee latest hearing on AI – Information Technology Subcommittee hearing on 'Game Changers: Artificial Intelligence Part II, Artificial Intelligence and the Federal Government', with testimony from Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency Information Innovation Office Deputy Director Dr John Everett; General Services Administration Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Information Technology Category Acquisition Management Keith Nakasone; National Science Foundation Assistant Director of Computer Science and Information Science and Engineering Dr James Kurose; and Homeland Security Advanced Research Project Agency Cybersecurity Division Director Dr Douglas Maughan Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2154, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

2:00 PM House Veterans' Affairs subcommittee legislative hearing – Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'H.R. 3497', 'H.R. 4245', a draft bill on purchase card misuse, and a draft bill on the Medical Surgical Prime Vendor program, with testimony from Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Management Director of Corporate Travel John Adams, Office of Information and Technology Health Portfolio Director Katrina Tuisamatatele, and Electronic Health Record Modernization Program Program Executive Office Director of Program Control Fred Mingo; Veterans Health Administration Acting Deputy Chief Procurement Officer Ricky Lemmon; The American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director Louis Celli Jr.; and National Veterans Small Business Coalition Executive Director Scott Denniston Location: Cannon House Office Building, Rm 334, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

2:00 PM House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on the current data security and breach notification regulatory regime – Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee hearing on 'Legislative Proposals to Reform the Current Data Security and Breach Notification Regulatory Regime', with testimony from Massachusetts Assistant Attorney General Sara Cable; Consumer Data Industry Association President and CEO Francis Creighton; Information Technology Industry Council Vice President for Global Policy and Law John Miller; and Financial Services Roundtable Vice President Jason Kratovil Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2128, Washington, DC <http://financialservices.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/FinancialCmte>

3:30 PM House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on FY'19 strategic forces budget – Strategic Forces Subcommittee hearing on 'U.S. Strategic Forces Posture and the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request', with testimony from U.S. Strategic Command Commander Gen. John Hyten; and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy John Rood Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

IACLEA Capitol Hill Day – International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators Capitol Hill Day, meeting Members of Congress to discuss issues of public safety at higher education institutions Location: Washington, DC [www.iaclea.org](http://www.iaclea.org)

**Other:** 8:00 AM Ripon Society discussion on 'The Future of NAFTA' – 'The Future of NAFTA' Ripon Society discussion, on the future of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the debate over modernizing the agreement in a way that keeps the economies of all three countries – the U.S., Canada, and Mexico – strong. Speakers include Republicans Sen. Jerry Moran and Rep. Will Hurd, Mexico Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Geronimo Gutierrez, and Canada Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. David MacNaughton Location: Capitol Hill Club, 300 1st St SE, Washington, DC [www.riponsociety.org](http://www.riponsociety.org) <https://twitter.com/RiponSociety>

8:15 AM Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks at the Economic Club of Washington, DC Location: Washington, DC [www.economicclub.org](http://www.economicclub.org) <https://twitter.com/TheEconomicClub>

9:00 AM Dem Rep. Rick Larsen keynotes discussion on U.S.-China relations at Brookings – 'The end of U.S. engagement with China?' Brookings Institution John L. Thornton China Center event assessing prospects for U.S.-China relations, with keynote from Democratic Rep. Rick Larsen. Other speakers include National Endowment for Democracy International Forum for Democratic Studies Director Shanthi Kalathil, George Washington University Elliot School of International Affairs Professor David Shambaugh, University of California Hastings College of Law Professor and Committee of 100 Chairman Frank Wu, Ford Foundation China Director Elizabeth Kump, and National Committee on United States-China Relations President Stephen Orlins Location: The Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC

<http://www.brookings.edu> <https://twitter.com/BrookingsInst> #USChinaTies

9:30 AM Dem Rep. Nancy Pelosi donates items to National Museum of American History – National Museum of American History holds special donation ceremony to receive three objects from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi representing her election as the first woman House Speaker – a lacquered-maple gavel, the burgundy pantsuit she wore to her swearing-in, and the original speech she gave on the morning of 4 Jan 2007. Attendees include House Republican Conference Chairwoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Smithsonian Regent Democratic Rep. Doris Matsui, Smithsonian Institution Secretary David Skorton, and National Museum of American History Director John Gray and curator Lisa Kathleen Graddy Location: Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, 1300 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://americanhistory.si.edu> <https://twitter.com/amhistorymuseum>

1:30 PM USDA press call on efforts to help rural communities address the opioid crisis – Secretary of Agriculture's Assistant for Rural Development Anne Hazlett discusses the role that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is playing to help address the opioid crisis, via national press call, including the announcement of a series of state-based opioid roundtables designed to share best local practices and tools rural communities are using to address opioid misuse and treatment Location: TBD [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov) <https://twitter.com/USDA>

6:30 PM DNC IWillVote Gala – Democratic National Committee IWillVote Gala, with DNC Chair Tom Perez and Democratic Sens. Cory Booker, Kirsten Gillibrand, Doug Jones and Elizabeth Warren Location: Andrew W Mellon Auditorium, 1301 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.democrats.org/> <https://twitter.com/TheDemocrats>

7:00 PM Dem Reps. Don Beyer and Ted Deutch town hall on gun and school safety – Democratic Reps. Don Beyer and Ted Deutch speak at town hall conversation on gun safety and the safety of U.S. schools, following the 14 Feb shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL. Participants include students from Alexandria City Public Schools and Fred Guttenberg – the father of 14-year-old Jaime, who was killed in Parkland Location: T.C. Williams High School Minnie Howard Campus, Alexandria, VA [beyer.house.gov/](http://beyer.house.gov/) <https://twitter.com/RepDonBeyer>

National Council of State Housing Agencies Legislative Conference concludes – National Council of State Housing Agencies Legislative Conference concludes, with speakers today including Democratic Sen. Christopher Coons and 'The Cook Political Report' Editor and Publisher Charlie Cook Location: Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC [www.ncsha.org](http://www.ncsha.org) <https://twitter.com/HomeEverything>

Vice President Mike Pence campaigns in Kentucky for Republican Rep. Andy Barr, who is running for re-election Location: TBD [andybarrforcongress.com](http://andybarrforcongress.com) <https://twitter.com/barrforcongress>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** "So two hours after [President Trump] was saying everybody wants to work at the White House, his top economic adviser Gary Cohn, resigned. He doesn't want to work at the White House. It is almost a miracle to behold. If Donald Trump says it is a sunny day, expect rain."

**Stephen Colbert:** "It's good to be alive and to stay that way, because we just found out that North Korea is willing to talk to the US about giving up their nuclear weapons. And not the usual way they talk about giving up their nuclear weapons, by dropping them on Seattle."

**James Corden:** "Trump said there's still people in the White House he'd like to replace. Yeah, we'd all like to replace someone in the White House."

**James Corden:** "On Capitol Hill, a group of House Democrats are trying to change the rules so members of Congress can't sleep in their offices overnight. Apparently, a lot of members of Congress do this to save money on rent. They sleep in their office. Is it just me or, anyone else concerned that the people running the country are living like alcoholic private detectives from the 1940s? Speaker of the House Paul Ryan defended sleeping in the office, explaining he wakes up early to work out, proving that, no matter where you work, there's always that one guy bragging he was in the gym at 5:00 a.m."

**Trevor Noah:** "Speaking of the Trump Administration, today there was yet another resignation. I know, shocking, shocking. Chief Economic Adviser Gary Cohn quit today. So I think at this point, the White House staff is just John Kelly and a fax machine Jared isn't allowed to use."

**Trevor Noah:** "If you never heard of Sam Nunberg, he was an early aide to Donald Trump who was hired, fired, and fired again, this time for using the n-word on Facebook, which is shocking someone got fired from the Trump campaign for being racist. I thought they hired people based on that."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "Now some big news out of Washington. Kellyanne Conway has been accused of violating federal ethics laws during TV appearances in 2017. If found guilty, she could be forced to leave her job, or even worse, stay."

**Jimmy Fallon:** "Robert Mueller is now investigating one of President Trump's personal lawyers. You know it's bad when even your lawyer is like, 'Do you know any good lawyers?'"

**Jimmy Fallon:** "Lego just revealed that they've made too many bricks over the years, and have unsold stockpiles in warehouses. So I think President Trump just found a solution for his border wall."

**Seth Meyers:** "According to the National Journal, former President George W. Bush frequently jokes about the Trump Administration, saying, quote, 'Makes me look pretty good, doesn't it?' Okay, but I wouldn't be too excited that this is what it takes to make you look good."

**Seth Meyers:** "In an interview with the Washington Post, former Trump aide Sam Nunberg said that he has been subpoenaed by special counsel Robert Mueller, but is refusing to go, saying, quote, 'Let him arrest me.' And then in an interview with everybody, Nunberg said, and I quote, 'Trump may very well have done something during the election. Carter Page colluded with the Russians. Sarah Huckabee Sanders is a joke, and nobody hates Donald Trump more than me.' Wow! Apparently, he believes the first step in Trump's infrastructure plan is to burn all the bridges."

**Seth Meyers:** "New York City is bracing for a nor'easter tomorrow that could bring up to 10 inches of snow. So just a heads-up, it may disrupt subway service starting around two years ago."

**Conan O'Brien:** "Today, [President Trump] promised that his tariffs on steel and aluminum would be applied in 'a loving way.' Congratulations, President Trump. You can even make tariffs creepy."

**Conan O'Brien:** "In an interview, President Trump warned there may be more people leaving the White House soon. After hearing this, prosecutor Robert Mueller said, 'Funny, I was just about to say the same thing.'"

**Jordan Klepper:** "Ladies and gentlemen, the swamp continues to drain. Trump's lead economic adviser, Gary Cohn, resigned this evening because he disagreed with the President's decision on steel tariffs. That's two birds with one tariff. Another Trump promise kept, getting all the Goldman Sachs people out of government, even the ones he brought into the government."

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



DATE: THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2018 6:00 AM EST

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## DOI In The News

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### Lawmakers Propose Boosting Park Funding With Oil Money.

[The Hill](#) (3/7, Cama) reports that "a bipartisan group of lawmakers unveiled a bill Wednesday to increase funding for national park infrastructure, using money from energy produced both offshore and on federal land." The National Park Restoration Act, backed by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, is "meant in part to implement the Trump administration's proposal last month for a new National Park Service (NPS) infrastructure fund paid for with money from oil drilling, wind, solar and other federal energy sources." The legislation "would take half of the money that the federal government gets from energy production that is above 2018 forecasts and not dedicated for another use."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/7, Siegel) reports that "the fund, which would hold up to \$18 billion, would be paid for by new leases for energy development on onshore and offshore federal lands. It also would finance schools under the Bureau of Indian Education." Zinke said, "Infrastructure is an investment, not merely an expense. And every dollar we put in to rebuilding our parks will help bolster the gateway communities that rely on park visitation for economic vitality. Since the early days of my confirmation, I've been talking with members of the House and Senate about how we can use energy revenue to rebuild and revitalize our parks and communities. This bill is the largest investment in national parks in our nation's history. This is not a Republican or Democrat issue. This is an American issue, and I think that the bipartisan body of lawmakers who put this bill forward is proof."

[E&E Publishing](#) (3/7, Hotakainen) reports that appearing with senators at a Capitol Hill news conference, "Zinke called the plan 'unprecedented in scale' and predicted that it will win backing from Democrats and Republicans alike in Congress." Zinke said, "Americans deserve to have a park system that's well-funded, that's well-operated, and the visitor experience in our parks should remain sacred. ... Our parks are red, white and blue."

Also reporting are the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (3/7, Chaney), the [Daily Inter Lake \(MT\)](#) (3/7, Reilly), the [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (3/7, Chaney), the [Maryville \(TN\) Daily Times](#) (3/8, Totten), the [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (3/7, Whetstone), the [Sevierville \(TN\) Mountain Press](#) (3/8, Farrell), the [Chattanooga \(TN\) Times Free Press](#) (3/7, Pace), the [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (3/7, Ramstack), the [Dearborn \(MI\) Press and Guide](#) (3/7, Kessler), the [Wyoming Business Report](#) (3/7), [Montana Public Radio](#) (3/7, O'BRIEN), [SNEWS](#) (3/7, Arvesen), [KTVZ-TV Bend \(OR\)](#) Bend, OR (3/7), [WBIR-TV Knoxville \(TN\)](#) Knoxville, TN (3/8), and [KGVO-FM Missoula \(MT\)](#) Missoula, MT (3/7, Christian).

### WH: Trump Still Opposed To Elephant Trophies Despite New Policy.

[The Hill](#) (3/7, Fabian, Cama) reports that President Trump "remains opposed to elephant trophy

hunting despite his administration's decision to allow some trophy imports on a 'case-by-case basis,' the White House said on Wednesday." White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policy was "a response to a court decision impacting how trophy import applications are reviewed." However, "conservationists say that Trump's previous statements amount to a promise to completely ban trophy imports from some countries, and that the new policy falls far short of that."

[ABC News](#) (3/7, Ebbs) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "defended the administration's reversal of the elephant trophy ban during a press conference on Capitol Hill on Wednesday morning." Zinke told reporters, "Let me make it absolutely clear: We are 100 percent aligned with the president's policy. The court itself said that we had to change our process, but the policy remains the same. We are 100 percent aligned with the president's policy."

Also reporting are [AP](#) (3/7, MILLER, BIESECKER), the [New York Times](#) (3/7, Nuwer), [CBS News](#) (3/7, Guild), the [New York Post](#) (3/7, Steinbuch), [Business Insider](#) (3/7, Berke), [Newsweek](#) (3/7, Silva), [CNBC](#) (3/7, Cerbin), [Smithsonian](#) (3/7, Katz), and [Vox](#) (3/7, Resnick).

### **Interior Secretary Starts Backing Off Drilling Plan Amidst GOP Resistance.**

The [McClatchy](#) (3/7, Dumain) reports that "facing mounting pressure from fellow Republicans who see little consistent support for drilling off the Atlantic coast, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke could be backpedaling on the Trump administration's initial plans to expand the program," according to GOP lawmakers. The article says that "in a meeting with affected coastal GOP representatives last week, Zinke reaffirmed an exemption from the drilling for Florida, hinted to New Jersey officials their state was likely to be spared and left a Virginia congressman optimistic the policy would be overturned for his state, too." Also, "Zinke said he'd travel to South Carolina to get a better sense of their concerns as well."

### **Zinke Introduces Offshore Safety Initiatives.**

[Offshore Magazine](#) (3/7) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "presented a series of six initiatives to strengthen the federal offshore oil and gas inspection program." At the 2018 CERAWEEK conference, Zinke "highlighted a risk-based inspection element and an increase in the amount of time allotted for physical inspection of offshore facilities as two of six initiatives that the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) will institute before mid-2018." The four other initiatives include: "increasing BSEE's engagement with industry, identifying the best available and safest technology requirements for critical offshore equipment, identifying gaps between advancing technologies and regulations, and researching the potential for third-party certification of BSEE's inspection program by the International Standards Organization." Zinke said, "One of the pillars to responsible energy development is ensuring it's done safely. As part of the Trump administration's push for safety in energy development, we are working hard to do our job smarter and ensure industry is exploring and producing safely." BSEE Director Scott Angelle said: "The six initiatives we are announcing today are an important set of steps that will keep pace with the increased offshore oil gas and production, ensure safety, and protect the environment. They will also help BSEE become a more efficient agency, something the American taxpayers expect and deserve."

### **Oil, Gas Groups Tell Trump To Back Off Tariffs.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/7, Siciliano, Siegel) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Tuesday defended President Trump's tariff plan. Zinke said during an appearance at CERAWEEK, "Long-term tariffs generally disrupt free markets and raise costs, but it is also incumbent on the American steel companies themselves – they have to re-fit and rebuild, just like these guys did." Zinke was "referring to the oil and gas industry's moves to lower their costs after prices declined."

### **Climate Change Skeptics Run The Trump Administration.**

[Politico](#) (3/7, Holden) reports that the President is filling high ranking positions in his Administration "with appointees who share his disbelief in the scientific evidence for climate change – giving them an opportunity to impose their views on policies ranging from disaster planning to national security to housing standards." A Politico review of Trump appointees' past statements on climate science found that he "has chosen at least 20 like-minded people to serve as agency leaders and advisers," and they are "already having an impact in abandoning former President Barack Obama's attempt to help unite the world against the threat of rising sea levels, worsening storms and spreading droughts." For example, "at the Interior Department, decisions



about Pacific island territories threatened by rising seas are in the hands of an assistant secretary who has criticized 'climate alarmists' for 'once again predicting the end of the world as we know it.'"

Additional coverage was provided by [Politico](#) (3/6, Holden, Lin).

***Trump Official Said Scientists Went 'Outside Their Wheelhouse' By Writing Climate Change 'Dramatically' Shrank Montana Glaciers.*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/7, Grandoni, Eilperin) reports that records released under the Freedom of Information Act show that Interior Department officials were critical of "a US Geological Survey study documenting how climate change has 'dramatically reduced' glaciers in Montana" and "questioned federal scientists' description of the decline." Reacting to a USGS headline which read, "The warming climate has dramatically reduced the size of 39 glaciers in Montana since 1966, some by as much as 85 percent," Doug Domenech, assistant secretary of insular areas at Interior, wrote in a May 10 email to three other Department officials, "This is a perfect example of them going outside their wheelhouse."

### **Keeping With Tradition, Trump Awards Jobs To Campaign Workers And Allies.**

The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Lipton, Ivory) reports that "nearly 260 or so former Trump campaign and inauguration workers...have gotten jobs reserved for political appointees in the administration, according to public records compiled by ProPublica." In total, over "2,475 political appointees have joined the federal government since President Trump took office, including at least 187 former lobbyists and also 125 people with ties to conservative think tanks." The Times notes that "the conservative appointees are spread across the government." For example, "at the Interior Department, Ryan Nichols is an adviser in the Office of Water and Science, after coordinating the Heritage Foundation's work with a group of climate change skeptics called the 'Cooler Heads Coalition.'"

### **Dems Urge Electioneering Probe Of Interior Secretary.**

[Law360](#) (3/7, Goldberg) reports that "top Democrats on the House Committee on Natural Resources on Wednesday urged the U.S. Office of Special Counsel to investigate whether Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke used a coal mine cleanup funding announcement to campaign for a congressional candidate, potentially violating the Hatch Act." Ranking minority member Raul Grijalva, and Donald McEachin, the ranking minority member of the committee's oversight and investigations subcommittee, "want Special Counsel Henry Kerner to launch a probe into Zinke's Feb. 24 appearance at a volunteer firehouse." in Fredericktown, Pennsylvania.

### **Arkansas Congressman Floats Land-Fund Overhaul.**

The [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#) (3/7, Lockwood) reports that "more of the money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund should be spent on maintenance, less on property acquisition," according to Rep. Bruce Westerman. The Federal Lands Investing Partnership Act, introduced on Monday, "would overhaul the way the money, which comes from offshore oil and gas leasing, is allocated, increasing the percentage that goes to states and the amount earmarked for 'deferred maintenance, critical infrastructure, visitor services, and clean-up efforts' on federal land or water controlled by the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management." Westerman said, "I don't think we need to be purchasing more land. I think we need to take care of the land and the assets we've got."

### **In Utah, It's The Donald J. Trump Highway Vs. The 'Stormy Daniels Rampway'.**

The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Turkewitz) reports, "Families visiting America's iconic national parks this summer might be surprised to find a new attraction" along the way: "the Donald J. Trump Utah National Parks Highway." State Rep. Michael Noel (R-UT) "has introduced a bill that would rename the state's most scenic route in honor of" Trump, "calling the move a show of gratitude to Mr. Trump for the president's December decision to slash the size of two contentious national monuments in the state." State Sen. Jim Dabakis (D-UT), who opposes the measure, "has said he would fight it by adding the name of" Stormy Daniels, "who is reported to have had an affair with the president." The Times quotes Dabakis as tweeting, "If it gets to the Senate. will present an amendment that the frontage road be designated as the Stormy Daniels rampway."

The [AP](#) (3/8) reports that the president of the Navajo Nation described the proposal as "insulting." Navajo President Russell Begaye "says honoring Trump would be like pouring salt on an open wound."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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## **New Documentary Highlights Mismanagement Of Native Trust Money By Feds.**

The [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (3/7, Townsend) reports that "the long running lawsuit for Native people who were denied billions of dollars in trust fund money after decades of federal mismanagement is the subject of a new film." 100 Years: One Woman's Fight for Justice is "the story of Blackfeet tribal member, the late Eloise Cobell," who "took on the Interior department over missing funds in trust accounts that were supposed to be paid to Native landowners for oil and gas, grazing and timber lease payments."

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Federal Court In Wyoming To Revisit Methane Rule Compliance, Following California Court Decision.**

The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (3/7, Richards) reports that "a Wyoming federal court will reopen the case into the Bureau of Land Management's methane rule, a set of requirements cutting emissions from the oil and gas sector that industry and politicians have repeatedly tried to get rid of." According to the article, "compliance on aspects of the Bureau of Land Management Methane Waste Reduction rule began in January of last year, after a failed attempt in the Wyoming courts to stay the rules implementation given a dispute over whether the federal agency was allowed to regulate natural gas emissions." Since then, "the rule has been on and off the books."

### **BLM Gives Go Ahead To Uranium Mine Near Shash Jaa National Monument.**

The [Moab \(UT\) Times-Independent](#) (3/7, Egelhoff) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has "released a decision allowing the expansion of Daneros Mine near Shash Jaa National Monument and the former Bears Ears National Monument." Energy Fuels Resources, Inc., which owns the mine, "says that with the price of uranium low, they have no immediate plans to develop Daneros mine — but it is important to have those permits in place so when the price of uranium goes up, miners can get right to work." Mike Neumann, "a senior project manager for Energy Fuels, said that the BLM performed the required analyses before approving the mine expansion."

## **Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management**

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### **Dems Ask For Longer Comment Period On Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan.**

[The Hill](#) (3/6, Cama) reports that 22 Senate Democrats including top Energy and Natural Resources Committee member Maria Cantwell (D-WA) sent a letter Monday to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke requesting an extension to the public comment period for the Trump Administration's proposed offshore drilling plan. Friday will mark the end of a 60-day comment period for the plan, released in January. The letter reads, "Given the large scope of the Draft Proposed Program, we believe a 60-day extension of the deadline for comments is necessary to allow for more public hearings in coastal areas and to give the public sufficient time to submit comments on offshore drilling."

### **Oceana Releases Economic Data Prior To Oil Drilling Deadline.**

[South Strand News \(SC\)](#) (3/7, Stairs) reports that ahead of the March 9 deadline for public comments on offshore drilling, "Oceana has released a new study about the economic effects of the proposal." The report "states that oil drilling would be a "bad deal" for coastal states since the Atlantic coast, the Pacific coast and Gulf coast of Florida, which are all being considered for oil drilling, support more than 2.6 million American jobs and roughly \$180 billion in Gross Domestic Product." Diane Hoskins, campaign director at Oceana, said, "From ocean views scattered with drilling platforms, to the industrialization of our coastal communities, to the unacceptable risk of more BP Deepwater Horizon-like disasters, expanding offshore drilling to new areas threatens thriving coastal economies and booming industries like tourism, recreation and fishing that rely on oil-free beaches and healthy oceans."

Additional coverage was provided by [UPI](#) (3/7, Howard) and the [Daily Mail](#) (3/7).

### **Maine Critics Throw Cold Water On Trump Administration's Offshore Drilling Plan.**

[Central Maine](#) (3/7, Miller) reports that "fishermen, environmentalists and lawmakers from

Maine's coast called on the Trump administration Wednesday to exclude the North Atlantic from a plan to potentially reopen much of the nation's coastline to oil and gas exploration." Representatives with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management were in Augusta for "an open house-style event to field questions about President Trump's controversial offshore energy proposal." According to the article, "the mere prospect of oil drilling in the Gulf of Maine or Georges Bank – and the accompanying environmental risks – was enough to draw more than 60 people to a pre-emptive event held before the bureau's open house."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (3/7), the [Portland \(ME\) Press Herald](#) (3/7, Miller), [WMEA-FM](#) Portland, ME (3/7, Leary), and [WABI-TV](#) Bangor, ME (3/7, Doyen).

### **San Diego Passes Resolution Against Offshore Drilling.**

[KFMB-TV](#) San Diego (3/6, Griego) reports that on Tuesday the San Diego City Council voted 7-1 in favor of "a resolution opposing oil and gas drilling off the California coast." Several members of the council expressed concerns that offshore "drilling would harm tourism, the San Diego economy and the marine environment." The article notes that the sole "no" vote was Councilman Scott Sherman, who "said he's not a fan of resolutions 'as they end up in a circular file in a bureaucrat's desk,'" and he noted that San Diego "pays lobbyists to relay San Diego's message to Washington, D.C."

### **If Trump Wants To Drill For Oil In San Diego Waters, He'll Have To Get Through His Navy.**

The [Voice Of San Diego](#) (3/5, Rivard) reports the Trump Administration's plans to allow drilling off the San Diego coast face another obstacle: the Department of Defense. According to Voice of San Diego, "Offshore drilling could flummox training and operations and, in turn, endanger national security." The Department of the Interior estimates that there are about a billion barrels of "technically recoverable" oil in the Oceanside-Capistrano basin, which is close to coastal San Diego County and Orange County. The Navy said it wants to "find compatible solutions, where possible, that support the development of domestic energy resources in concert with enabling military operations, testing, and training." The Marine Corps said it agreed with the Navy.

### **Offshore Drilling Seeing State And Local Opposition.**

[KXRO-AM](#) Aberdeen, WA (3/6) reports that the Federal offshore drilling proposal "is drawing vocal opposition locally and in Olympia." On Monday, Washington State opponents of offshore drilling spoke at "their own organized hearing in Olympia ahead of an event hosted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to take public comment." Attorney General Bob Ferguson told attendees he plans to sue if the offshore plan is approved. The cities of Westport and Ocean Shores have issued resolutions opposing offshore drilling.

[Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) (3/6, Wang) reports opponents of the Trump administration's offshore drilling plan, led by Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson, rallied at a "People's Hearing" in Olympia, Washington on Monday. Commissioner of Public Lands Hillary Franz said, "We have collectively, all of us, worked far too long to protect those shorelines, not only for the natural resources and the environment but also for the local economies that depend on it." Franz promised that "the state would deny permits for any drilling operations that cross into state waters, which run three miles out from shore."

The [North Coast \(WA\) News](#) (3/6, Bruscas) reports that at the local opposition event ahead of the BOEM public hearing Monday, Ocean Shores, WA Mayor Crystal Dingler spoke out against offshore drilling. She stated, "Our beach town's economy is 100 percent dependent on tourism, recreation, and fishing, and we will do everything we can to protect our jobs and beautiful beaches from being put at risk from an oil spill. We've gone through that before, and have vowed to fight this offshore drilling plan tooth and nail."

### **Trump Off-Shore Drilling Initiative Gets Cool Response From NH Protesters.**

The [New Hampshire Union Leader](#) (3/6, Solomon) reports that on Monday New Hampshire opponents of the Federal offshore drilling plan "lined the sidewalk in front of the Concord Holiday Inn" while Federal officials hosted "an information session on the proposal" inside. During that information session, opponents also spoke to the 18 Bureau of Ocean Energy Management employees visiting Concord for a public hearing.

### **Feds Told Offshore Drilling Is Not An Option For Long Island.**

The [Sag Harbor \(NY\) Express](#) (3/6, Kotz) reports that Friday during a hearing with Federal officials at Brookhaven Town Hall in New York, "dozens of elected officials, environmentalists and

everyday citizens” spoke out against offshore drilling. The hearing, “chaired by Kate MacGregor, one of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s deputies,” saw “several hundred very vocal opponents” turn up. Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-NY), an opponent of offshore drilling, arranged the hearing. The hearing lasted for six hours, the Express notes.

### **With Drilling Comment Period Closing Soon, Regan Visits Onslow Coast.**

The [Jacksonville \(NC\) Daily News](#) (3/6, Wagner) reports that in comments to Onslow County, NC officials on Tuesday, Michael Regan, secretary for the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality spoke against the Federal offshore drilling plan. Regan said, “A danger to our economy is more important or just as important in terms of national security than the few benefits that oil might produce.” The Daily News notes that over the past few weeks, Regan has visited coastal communities across the state to spread “the message that he, Gov. Roy Cooper (R-NC) and Attorney General Josh Stein are staunchly opposed to the Trump Administration’s plan to open the North Carolina coast to offshore drilling in its 2019-2024 plan.”

### **Virginia Offshore Drilling Forum Brings Gov. Northam And Big Crowd.**

The [Delmarva \(MD\) Daily Times](#) (3/6, Her) reports that there was an offshore drilling forum Monday at Old Dominion University to discuss how the Federal offshore drilling plan might effect Virginia. During the forum, Gov. Ralph Northam (D-VA) said, “It is important to this country as well and the east coast and that is to do everything we can to prevent offshore drilling.”

## **Fish And Wildlife Service**

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### **Cleanup To Remove Buried Drums At Wildlife Refuge Site.**

The [AP](#) (3/7) reports that “a cleanup effort will remove buried drums found near the construction site for the new Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge visitor center and headquarters in southeastern Michigan.” Work is slated to begin “Monday and Tuesday in Trenton and is expected to be completed around mid-May.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “says the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality is leading the work on the former automotive parts factory site.”

### **47,000 Asian Carp Removed From Creve Coeur Lake.**

[KSDK-TV](#) St. Louis (3/7) reports that “after an intensive three-week purge, 85 percent of the Asian carp in Creve Coeur Lake are gone.” According to the article, “the experimental removal project was conducted by the Missouri Department of Conservation, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and St. Louis County Parks last month.” In all, “biologists took out around 47,000, or about 119 tons, of the unwanted invasive fish from the lake.”

## **National Park Service**

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### **The Most Popular National Parks In 2017? This May Surprise You.**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/7, Forgione) reports that “national parks received 330,882,751 visitors in 2017, a little less than the record-setting number in 2016, the National Park Service’s centennial year.” Great Smoky Mountains National Park “tops the list with more than 11 million visitors, almost twice as many as the second-most-visited park,” the Grand Canyon with “a milestone 6-million-plus visitors.”

### **National Park Service Completes Fort Pickens Preservation Project.**

The [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (3/7, Gabriel) reports that the National Park Service has “finished a big preservation project at Fort Pickens.” According to the article, “the \$269,000 project shored up some areas of the fort that were threatened by encroaching vegetation and water runoff.”

### **3 Bison Activists Charged In Yellowstone National Park.**

The [AP](#) (3/7) reports that “a judge has ordered three bison activists arrested in Yellowstone National Park to be detained until at least Monday.” U.S. Magistrate Judge Mark Carman “granted a federal prosecutor’s request to delay court proceedings until Monday and to detain the three defendants until then.” The defendants, Thomas Brown of Hardwick, Vermont; Cody J. Cyson of

Minnetonka, Minnesota; and Hanna Ponder of Donnelly, Idaho, are "affiliated with an advocacy group called Wild Buffalo Defense that seeks to draw attention to the slaughter of bison."

### **Grand Teton Axes Body Cameras.**

The [Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (3/7, Mieure) reports that rangers at Grand Teton National Park are "no longer recording their interactions on body and dash cameras." According to the article, "after wearing them for over a decade the park's body camera program has been discontinued until officials can figure out a more 'sustainable' strategy." The park's public affairs officer, Denise Germann cited "issues of storage and the time it takes to download video each day."

### **Under Contract.**

[The Hill](#) (3/7) reports that the National Park Service is "paying \$166,800 to 'refurbish bronze doors' at Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial in Ohio." Milestone Management Group won the contract.

## **Insular And International Affairs**

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### **Chinese Firms Will Pay \$14 Million Back Wages In Saipan Case.**

The [AP](#) (3/5, Yan) reports that "four Chinese construction firms will pay nearly \$14 million in back wages and damages to thousands of Chinese workers for construction of a casino in the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands." Investigators discovered "the contractors paid employees less than what was required by law, according to a U.S. Department of Labor statement released Monday." The settlement will affect more than 2,400 employees.

### **EU Tax Haven Blacklist Set To Shrink Further, Causing Outcry.**

[Reuters](#) (3/6, Guarascio) reports that "European Union states are set to remove Bahrain, the Marshall Islands and Saint Lucia from a list of tax havens next week, leaving only six jurisdictions on it, an EU document shows." The decision by the EU Code of Conduct Group "drew criticism from an anti-corruption watchdog on Tuesday." The move is "also likely to bring more disapproval from lawmakers and activists who had strongly criticized a first delisting in January that cut the number of jurisdictions named to nine from 17."

### **Schools For Environmental Conservation.**

[Marianas Variety](#) (3/8) reports that "Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance hosted a coral reef conservation workshop this past weekend for teachers and students from various high schools and middle schools on island as part of their 'Schools for Environmental Conservation' or SFEC program." Activities for the "one day educational workshop" were "completely funded by MINA with support from the Coral Reef Initiative/Natural Resources Program in the Office of Insular Affairs."

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **Nominee To Lead USGS Is Hard To Read.**

[Scientific American](#) (3/7, Patterson) reports that James Reilly II, the nominee to lead the U.S. Geological Survey, "sidestepped a question yesterday about whether climate change is a core mission" of the agency. Speaking with reporters after a hearing with the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Reilly "said he 'couldn't address' whether the office's climate research fits into its traditional mandate." He said, "One of the things I will be looking at very closely, though, is how do the main mission areas, how do they tie in. A good understanding of the ecosystems is obviously a requirement that we have to have here as a national priority. That's going to be something we're going to obviously focus on as part of the charter of the USGS and one of the prime mission areas." Reilly also "sidestepped other questions about the agency's mission, not just those on climate, and said he would wait to be confirmed before commenting on specific issues under the banner of USGS."

Also reporting are [Eos](#) (3/7, Showstack) and [KTOO-FM Juneau \(AK\)](#) Juneau, AK (3/7, Ruskin).

## Additional Reading.

- *First Rising Tides, Now Sinking Shores: Study Finds New Trouble For Bay Area.* [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (3/8, Alexander).
- *Climate Change Tightens Grip On US West Coast Despite Progressive Aspirations.* [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (3/7, Milman).
- *Sea Level Rise In The SF Bay Area Just Got A Lot More Dire.* [Wired](#) (3/7, Simon).

## Opinion Pieces

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### Secretary Of Interior Ryan Zinke Attacks America's Wilderness.

In an op-ed for the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (3/7, Proescholdt), Kevin Proescholdt, the conservation director for Wilderness Watch, writes that "in just the first year of the Trump administration, America's wilderness, public lands and wildlife legacy have been under constant attack." In particular, Proescholdt takes issue with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "anti-wilderness actions." In Proescholdt's view, "far from being a conservationist like Teddy Roosevelt, as he likes to pretend in public, Ryan Zinke is actually more modeling President Reagan's notorious Secretary of Interior James Watt, or Warren Harding's Interior Secretary Albert Hall of the Teapot Dome scandal."

### Trump's Offshore Drilling Plan Is Simply A Terrible Idea.

In an op-ed in [The Hill](#) (3/6, Safina) Carl Safina, a MacArthur Fellow who holds the endowed chairman for Nature and Humanity at Stony Brook University, notes the pending Friday deadline for public comment on the Federal offshore drilling proposal. He calls the proposal "a gift to the oil industry, a dismissal of the American public, and a retreat from addressing the challenge of climate change." He also warns of the risks involved in offshore drilling, pointing to the Deepwater Horizon spill as well as the risks of Arctic Ocean drilling.

### Deadline Nears For Public Comment On Offshore Oil Drilling.

In an op-ed in the [Cape \(DE\) Gazette](#) (3/6, Flood) former newspaper editor Don Flood calls the proposed offshore drilling plan "bad news," but says that there is "good news," because "the federal government is seeking comments from the public before it begins selling leases for offshore drilling." Still, Flood concludes that "for long-term protection of our precious coastline, we need to kick politicians like Trump out of office."

### Utah Lawmakers Might Want To Wait Before Naming A Highway After Donald Trump.

The [Ogden \(UT\) Standard-Examiner](#) (3/7) editorializes that Rep. Mike Noel has "sponsored a bill to change the name of the Utah National Parks Highway to the Donald J. Trump Utah National Parks Highway — just his little way of thanking the president for slashing nearly 2 million acres from the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments, opening them for oil, gas, coal and uranium development." But the paper cautions Noel and Republican lawmakers "to see how Stormy Daniels' lawsuit turns out before they decide to name a highway after the 45th president."

## Additional Reading.

- *Congress Must Act To Protect Forests From Worsening Fires.* [The Hill](#) (3/7, Imbergamo, O'Mara).
- *Loan To Jared Kushner Raises Questions About California Water Project.* [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/7, Hiltzik).
- *Westlands Water-U.S. Drainage Settlement Is Fair And Equitable.* [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (3/7, Amaral).
- *Future Of Our Coast Is In Your Hands.* [Sumter \(SC\) The Item](#) (3/7, Howell).
- *Opinion: As Comment Period Ends, Drilling Still Makes No Sense.* [Outer Banks \(NC\) Voice](#) (3/7, Walker).
- *Commentary: No Listening At Hearing On Offshore Drilling Plan.* [Tideland News \(NC\)](#) (3/7, Tursi).
- *OPINION SHAPER: Cons Outweigh The Pros Of Offshore Drilling.* [Berkeley \(SC\) Independent](#) (3/7, Bragg).



- *US Changes Its Mind On Trophy Hunting Again.* [Johannesburg Times \(ZAF\)](#) (3/8, Cruise).
- *The Interior Department Is Putting The Fossil Fuel Industry First And Americans Last.* [Washington Monthly](#) (3/7, Clement).

## Top National News

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### Trump To Announce Tariffs With Possible Exemptions For Mexico, Canada.

President Trump's plans to levy tariffs on steel and aluminum imports continued to generate extensive – and mainly unfavorable – media coverage, which highlights the concerns of GOP lawmakers and business leaders. The coverage also highlights that the President may have budged in his initial opposition to exempt certain countries from the tariffs. The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/7, story 7, 1:25, Glor) reported that "congressional Republicans are making a lasting-ditch attempt to change Trump's mind," and "it appears the White House is listening, because today for the first time...they said that countries like Mexico and Canada, US allies essentially, might be exempt." The [AP](#) (3/7, Thomas) says the move "could soften the blow amid threats of retaliation by trading partners and dire economic warnings from lawmakers and business groups." Press Secretary Sarah Sanders told reporters the exemptions "would be made on a 'case by case' and 'country by country' basis."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/7, Lynch, Paletta) indicates, meanwhile, that "the announcement came after Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson made a last-minute appeal for flexibility, saying that overly broad tariffs could damage relationships with US allies." [Breitbart](#) (3/7, Carney) cites a "source" that "said that NAFTA trade negotiators think imposing the sanctions while the negotiations are ongoing would be 'unhelpful,'" but "if the NAFTA negotiations fail, the exemption from the tariffs would be lifted." This "is seen as giving Mexico and Canada greater incentives to cooperate with US demands."

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/7, Talev, Olorunnipa) notes that earlier Wednesday, Commerce Secretary Ross had also "signaled that the administration is open to exempting countries besides Mexico and Canada, though he didn't mention national security as a criteria that would be used." Said Ross, "The president indicated that if we can work something out with Canada and Mexico, they will be exempted. It's not inconceivable that others could be exempted on a similar basis." The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Swanson) also points out Trump "and other administration officials have also indicated that Canada, Mexico or other close allies could be exempted through renegotiated trade deals or other measures."

The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Swanson) reports the tariffs "would not go into effect immediately, however, with a two-week implementation period required under the statute that gives the president authority to impose the measures." That "could give countries or companies a chance to submit input and try to sway the administration's plan, according to the people familiar with the deliberations."

[Bloomberg News](#) (3/7, Mohsin) reports that in a phone interview, Treasury Secretary Mnuchin "said he recognizes the risk of retaliation against the US...but still believes the move will benefit American workers." Said Mnuchin, "If you want to negotiate things that are good for us, you have to be prepared for the consequences. ... Our objective is not to create a trade war. Our objective is to make sure US companies and workers are treated fairly." [The Hill](#) (3/7, Fabian), meanwhile, notes Ross also "said on Wednesday that the Trump administration was not looking to start a trade war," telling CNBC, "We're not trying to blow up the world. ... We want to balance our needs to fix the trade deficit with the needs of the economy, and the needs of the global economy itself."

The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Swanson), citing "people familiar with the deliberations," says the President "is expected to formally sign off on" the "stiff tariffs...at noon on Thursday," while [Bloomberg News](#) (3/7, Mayeda, Mohsin) cites a "White House official" who says the orders will be signed "at 3:30 p.m." and the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/7, Higgs) notes Ross told [Fox Business](#), "I don't want to get ahead of the president, but I believe that we will live up to his promise that it will be this week, not including Saturday."

Mnuchin, asked on [Bloomberg TV](#) (3/7) if the announcement could come this week, said, "That is the plan, yes. ... It could be as early as tomorrow. It could be Friday. We are working to get the finishing documents on this." [Reuters](#) (3/7, Holland), meanwhile, notes "a White House official said Trump hoped to sign the presidential proclamation on Thursday afternoon but it could slide to Friday so that documents could be cleared through a legal process." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7, Bender, Timiraos) similarly reports Trump aims to finalize the tariffs this week, and



the [Washington Times](#) (3/7, Miller) that he "is scheduled to hold a campaign rally Saturday in southwest Pennsylvania, deep in steel country," though he is "not expected to sign the order at the rally."

[USA Today](#) (3/7, Jackson) reports that "late Wednesday, the White House was pulling together details of a formal ceremony as aides suggested some countries might be exempted from the tariffs, including Mexico and Canada." However, "adding to the confusion, Wednesday night when the White House released its schedule for Thursday, no signing ceremony was listed." Ed Henry said on [Fox News @ Night](#) (3/7) the "event now looks like it is not on the schedule...because the lawyers at the White House we were told, are literally still trying to put all of the details to together."

***Tariff Opponents Disappointed Pence Maintained "Studiously Neutral Position."*** [Politico](#) (3/7, Nussbaum, Johnson) reports that Vice President Pence "has been among the legions of top administration officials pushing...Trump to back off the sweeping protectionist plan he put forward during a March 1 meeting with industry executives." According to "more than a half-dozen White House and Capitol Hill aides," Pence "has been quietly delivering messages to the president from Republicans on the Hill, who have publicly opposed the tariffs plan set to be announced as early as Thursday – though he's made sure to maintain a studiously neutral position, to the frustration of some who had hoped he would do more to exert influence over Trump." USA Today adds that "a political adviser to one right-leaning outside group called his lack of engagement on tariffs a 'big time' disappointment, and said the feeling was shared among free-market Republicans."

***Freedom Caucus Joins Chorus Of Those Wanting Trump To Reconsider Tariffs.*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/7, Costa, Dawsey) reports "a growing group of Republican lawmakers are making a last-ditch effort to convince...Trump to reverse course or at-- least temper his positions – on economic tariffs, according to people familiar with the conversations." The Post adds that "in recent days, the House Freedom Caucus...has been privately urging Trump to back off his proposed tariffs," with Rep. Mark Meadows, the group's chairman and "one of Trump's most trusted allies in Congress," speaking "with the president multiple times" and relaying "the group's staunch opposition to" his plans. Yesterday, Caucus members and other GOP lawmakers "were trying to organize a meeting with Trump later this week to go over their concerns," but a "senior White House official" said "that meeting is unlikely to happen."

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (3/7) that Trump is "going after the bad actors, the people who cheat on steel and aluminum and cost us American jobs. We are all with him on that. The problem is the approach also captures the good actors. In fact, countries that buy a ton of American made steel aluminum and a lot of other things that America makes. Where we are at and a lot of Republican in the House is Mr. President, go after the bad actors. We are with you. Protect the good ones because that protects our jobs. So we are going to keep having that discussion with him."

***Cruz: Tariffs "A Mistake."*** Sen. Ted Cruz said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (3/7), "I think the tariffs on steel and aluminum are a mistake. I think there are a lot more jobs in this country that are dependent on steel and aluminum as inputs and we are going to end up costing more jobs because of the tariffs than will be saved. And that doesn't even factor into account the retaliatory tariffs that we may see Europe and China or other trading partners do which could hurt farmers, manufacturers."

***EU Signals It Could Retaliate Against US Cranberries, Orange Juice, Peanut Butter.*** The [Washington Post](#) (3/7, Birnbaum, Ariès) reports the EU's "top trade official mentioned cranberries, orange juice and peanut butter as possible targets on Wednesday as the bloc prepares to strike back if President Trump follows through with tariffs on imports of steel and aluminum." EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström also, "took aim at Trump's assertion that US national security justified plans to slap tariffs of 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminum," arguing that "the US measures 'would mainly impact traditional allies of the United States.'" The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Schreuer) says "the overall size of the business affected is relatively small, worth about 2.8 billion euros, or \$3.5 billion, in imports, paling in comparison with the nearly €250 billion of goods the 28-nation bloc bought from the United States in 2016."

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7) says EU retaliation will predominantly hit GOP-led states, and expresses fear that Trump will respond by upping the ante even more. The Journal concludes by urging the President to negotiate with the EU, and seek a broad trade agreement with the bloc.

In an analysis piece, meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7, Ip) says Trump's move threatens to alienate key allies whose support may be essential to US moves to curb predatory

Chinese trade behavior.

Sen. Chris Murphy said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (3/7), "Tariffs can be a really important tool to try to make sure that other countries know that they can't manipulate our economy. Let's be honest, that's what China has been doing. They have been dumping steel below the cost of raw material and that hurts our own industry. But when you announce tariffs without talking to our allies about it, allies that aren't dumping that product in the United States, you set off a series of consequences that are both economic and strategic. And that's what I worry about with respect to this announcement. You have a potential fissure between the US and Europe that comes at the worst time. That's what the Russians are rooting for a breakup of the transatlantic alliance."

**WPost Analysis Ties Trump's Trade Stance To Childhood "Resentment That Others Didn't Respect Him."** In an analysis piece, the [Washington Post](#) (3/7, Fisher) reports that Trump "has always looked askance at people whose decisions derive from ideology," but "there's one issue on which the president has been rock-solid consistent for four decades: his fiery demands that the United States punish countries that take advantage of American workers." The Post goes on to say that "the issue spoke to him personally: Driven since childhood by his resentment that others didn't respect him or take him seriously, he believed his country was similarly being taken advantage of."

**Samuelson: Tariffs About Trump's Ego.** Under the headline "Trump's Tariffs Are A Triumph Of Pride Over Policy," Robert J. Samuelson, meanwhile, writes in the [Washington Post](#) (3/7) that "the controversy...is less about economics than ego – Trump's ego." Samuelson adds that "frustrated by special counsel Robert S. Mueller's III investigation and the reported chaos in the White House, the president, it seems, had to show who's boss and who's driving events. Hence, his broadside attack against many traditional US allies, including Canada, Japan and Mexico."

**Koch Criticizes Tariffs.** Charles Koch, chairman of the board and chief executive of Koch Industries, lauds the state of the US economy in the [Washington Post](#) (3/7) and argues "history is filled with examples of administrations that have implemented trade restrictions with devastating results." Tariffs "will not add thousands of American jobs. Instead, the research shows that, while they preserve some jobs that would otherwise disappear, they reduce many other higher productivity jobs. The net effect will be not more jobs, but lower overall productivity."

**Breitbart: Harley-Davidson Criticizes Proposed Tariffs, Lays Off Workers.** [Breitbart](#) (3/7, Binder) reports, citing the New York Post, that Harley-Davidson "released a statement" this week on President Trump's proposed tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, "saying the motorcycle would be hit, as far as sales, if the tariffs were enacted." Breitbart adds that "at the same time, Harley-Davidson has been most recently laying off American manufacturing workers."

### **Citing Trump Tariffs, US Steel Says It Will Restart Illinois Plant.**

US Steel's announcement that it will restart a plant in Granite City, IL generated extensive regional coverage, including local TV and print reports. The coverage universally noted that the company credited President Trump's trade policies for enabling it to reopen production in Granite City. [WICD-TV](#) Champaign, IL (3/7, 6:07 p.m. CST) reported "company officials say the expect demand to rise after...Trump announced a 25 percent tariff on steel imports," [WGEM-TV](#) Quincy, IL (3/7, 6:07 p.m. CST) that the move comes "after...Trump announced a 25 percent tariff on steel imports," and [WGN-TV](#) Chicago (3/7, 5:27 p.m. CST) that "Trump's promise to create new tariffs on steel and aluminum" is "good news for Granite City, IL." [KHQA-TV](#) Quincy, IL (3/7, 5:06 p.m. CST), meanwhile, referred to "big economic news," and also reported "the company is anticipating increased demand based on...Trump's promise to announce new tariffs on imported steel and aluminum."

The [Belleville \(IL\) News-Democrat](#) (3/7, Bustos, Johnson, Landis) reports the "steel mill got the final boost it needed to rehire laid-off workers after President Donald Trump called for tariffs on imported steel." Said Dan Simmons, president of the United Steelworkers Local 1889, "It was just the icing on the cake. ... It was a shot in the arm that was badly needed and long overdue," and "the word around here is ecstatic." US Steel President and CEO David B. Burritt also "lauded the president's actions, saying the Granite City region has 'suffered too long from the unending waves of unfairly traded steel products that have flooded US markets.'"

The [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) (3/7, Feldt, Barker) quotes Simmons as saying of idled workers, "Immediately, I've seen some of the biggest smiles on their faces. ... It's just so much relief for them and their families." The Post-Dispatch also quotes Burritt, "The President's strong leadership is needed to begin to level the playing field so companies like ours can compete, win and create jobs that support our employees and the communities in which we operate as well as strengthen

our national and economic security.” [USA Today](#) (3/7, Madhani) notes Burritt’s statement in a brief report, as does [Politico](#) (3/7, Behsudi).

The [AP](#) (3/7) reports the company “said Wednesday that it anticipates calling about 500 Granite City Works employees back to work in March,” and that “the change comes due to anticipated demand for more US steel in response to Trump’s tariff announcement last week.” The AP adds “about 2,000 workers were laid off when US Steel idled the St. Louis-area plant in late 2015.”

The [Times of Northwest Indiana](#) (3/7, Pete) reports “US Steel said it will need the additional steelmaking capacity to meet an expected increase in demand for its steel.” The American Iron and Steel Institute “estimates that about 26 percent of the steel consumed in the United States this year was made abroad, but tariffs would make the imports 25 percent more expensive.”

The [Duluth \(MN\) News Tribune](#) (3/7, Myers) says the move also “could increase demand for taconite iron ore from the company’s Minnesota mines.” US Steel’s “Keetac operation in Keewatin had previously been supplying Granite City, and Keetac shut down in May 2015 as the steel furnaces slowed production.” Keetac “reopened in early 2017, even with Granite City furnaces still idled, with the company saying it was selling the extra taconite pellets to foreign buyers.”

CNN Money emerging markets editor John Deferios said on [CNN International](#) (3/7), “I thought it was fascinating to see so quickly” US Steel added “500 jobs immediately because of the tariffs action. We saw an aluminum producer out of the state of Kentucky doing the same. We have to take a step back here. Nobody can really criticize the Trump Administration with the methodology that’s being used here to apply tariffs. ... I think what disrupted everybody else was the fact that it was shouted from the rooftops and he said we could win the trade war. It also brings into question the strategy of the Republican Party going forward. ... As you know they are ardent free traders.”

***Zekelman CEO Offers Bonus To All Employees, Expects To Pick Up Production.*** The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/7, story 8, 2:30, Glor) said Trump “did narrowly win the battleground state of Pennsylvania in 2016, partly on his promise to revive the steel industry,” and went on to report from “steel country to get tariff plan reaction.” CBS (Miller) added, “Wheatland, PA is home to one of the largest steel pipe makers in North America,” Zekelman Industries. Barry Zekelman, CEO of Zekelman Industries, “told us he expects to add hundreds of jobs in Wheatland alone and pick up production if Trump’s 25 percent tariff on foreign steel becomes reality.” Zekelman is “so fired up about the President’s trade plan, he’s pledged to give \$1,000 to each of his 2,000 employees every year the tariff stands.”

## **GOP Lawmakers In State Of “Alarm” Over Potential Cohn Replacements.**

Media reports indicate that concerns about President Trump’s trade policies have become more acute after the news broke yesterday that economic adviser Gary Cohn would be leaving his White House post, setting off, as the [AP](#) (3/7, Thomas) puts it, “anxiety among business leaders,” GOP lawmakers “and investors worried about a potential trade war.”

[Politico](#) (3/7, Everett, Bade) similarly says “GOP alarm is reaching new heights with...Cohn’s departure from the White House,” and the [New York Times](#) (3/7, Swanson, Tankersley) that with Cohn out of the picture “few of” Trump’s “top economic policy aides share the traditional Republican views” on trade. The news, says [USA Today](#) (3/7, Shell, Jansen), “has rattled financial markets and raised questions among nervous CEOs about whether his replacement will be an advocate of free trade or favor more populist and nationalist economic policies.”

[USA Today](#) (3/7, Shell, Jansen) lists several candidates to replace Cohn: Peter Navarro, “an opponent of the trade agreement called the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which Trump withdrew from,” as well as “a vocal critic of China and trade deficits” who “backs Trump on the steel and aluminum tariffs.” Larry Kudlow, “a senior contributor on economics for CNBC and a former official in the Reagan Administration,” has “criticized Trump’s tariff proposal and supported the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, which Trump has criticized.” Shahira Knight “was Cohn’s deputy at the National Economic Council, as deputy assistant to the president for economic policy.” Kevin Warsh, meanwhile, “was a member of the board of governors for the Federal Reserve from 2006 to 2011” who “earlier worked for the National Economic Council as a special assistant to the president. Previously, he worked in the mergers and acquisitions department at Morgan Stanley & Co., becoming vice president and executive director.”

Another [USA Today](#) (3/7, Jackson) story says that “at the White House these days, the ‘nationalists’ are winning. At least for now,” because Kudlow has criticized the tariffs. In its report on potential Cohn replacements, [Bloomberg News](#) (3/7, Jacobs, Cirilli) also mentions Goldman Sachs Group Inc. executive Jim Donovan, Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Kevin Hassett,

Mick Mulvaney, head of the White House Office of Management and Budget; Chris Liddell, assistant to the president for strategic initiatives; economist Stephen Moore; Vice President Mike Pence's chief economist Mark Calabria; and Bob Steel, former under-secretary for domestic finance at Treasury under President George W. Bush.

A [Reuters](#) (3/7, Chance, Rampton) analysis, meanwhile, describes Navarro as "an economist who believes that Chinese goods are literally poisoning Americans, advocates ending Washington's 'One China' policy and says trade deals have weakened the United States economically with the connivance of US business." Navarro, "sidelined under Cohn," has "emerged as the big winner from renewed turmoil in the White House." While he says "he is not in the running to replace...Cohn," he "will be a big winner from the departure of a person seen as a bulwark against economic protectionism."

□ [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/7, story 3, 2:05, Welker) said "Cohn is the latest member of the President's inner circle to head for the door. In all, 43 percent left Trump's White House, a higher turnover than Trump's four most predecessors each had in their first two years." [Politico](#) (3/7, Everett, Bade) reports GOP lawmakers have found Cohn to be "one of Hill Republicans' most accessible conduits to the White House," working "closely with them on tax reform, banking deregulation and, most critically, pushing back against new tariffs – an argument that Cohn clearly lost." RSC Chairman Mark Walker, among other GOP lawmakers, said, "We need an advocate in 'the circle,' because it seems like the people who are influencing Trump right now are more pro-tariff, like Peter Navarro," Rep. Peter King, meanwhile, "tried to list a few potential replacements for Cohn but seemed to be unsatisfied with his own answers other than Larry Kudlow." Said King, "I would have said [Trump's son-in-law and adviser Jared] Kushner, but I don't know. ... Mnuchin? He seems to be going out of his way to talk about NAFTA, how they could change the tariffs for Canada and Mexico. He might be more sympathetic. I don't know. I'm trying to think. Mick Mulvaney?"

The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Swanson, Tankersley) says "Cohn's departure comes amid the ascendance of advisers who have urged the president to take tougher action on trade" Peter Navarro, "a trade skeptic who had been sidelined by Mr. Cohn, has been promised a promotion and made the rounds on Sunday talk shows to promote Mr. Trump's trade policy," while "Ross, who oversaw an investigation that led to the tariffs, succeeded in moving up the announcement even as Mr. Cohn sought to delay it." Lighthizer has also "become a trusted adviser to the president."

[The Hill](#) (3/7, Needham) quotes Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn also weighing in, "I'm concerned who the president will turn to for advice. ... I think Mr. Cohn was an outstanding public servant and somebody who had the credentials and experience to help the president decide what the policies of the government should be." Sarah Sanders, later yesterday, "said that Cornyn shouldn't be concerned about Cohn's departure." Said Sanders, "The president's got a number of very accomplished, smart, capable people around him and he is going to continue to lean on a lot of those people." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7, Peterson, Hughes) notes similar statements praising Cohn from GOP lawmakers including Sens. Jeff Flake and Rob Portman.

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady said on □ [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (3/7) that Cohn "was invaluable in tax reform. He was at the table trying to find a way forward." Asked who he would recommend to replace Cohn, Brady said, "I looked at a long list that came out today. There is some good names on there. People I have worked with before like Larry Kudlow, Mick Mulvaney, others. I think the President is going to have a really good list to choose from. It's a very important position. ... The President, he will make a good choice."

**Stephens: Cohn's Departure "Demolishes" Theories "Cherished" By Trump "Apologists."** Bret Stephens writes in the [New York Times](#) (3/7) that "like a lot of guys, I've watched 'The Shawshank Redemption' more times than I can count," and "when I heard the news that...Cohn had resigned...I thought of Red's (Morgan Freeman's) somber line: 'Every man has his breaking point.'" Whether Cohn "quit out of horror of the president's protectionist turn, or merely out of the pique of losing a policy argument, is an open question," but "whatever the case, Cohn couldn't take it," and "his departure demolishes three theories, cherished by administration apologists, as to why the Trump presidency will be a success (or at the least not a disaster) despite the temperament of the man at the top." These three theories, now in doubt, are: "Theory No. 1: The grown-ups are in charge. ... Theory No. 2: Trump doesn't believe his own crazy rhetoric. ... Theory No. 3: Serious Republicans will contain Trump's follies."

### **Head Of Forest Services Resigns Amid Sexual Harassment Allegations.**

The [New York Times](#) (3/7, Baumgaertner) reports that Tony Tooke, head of the US Forest

Service, has resigned "amid an investigation into sexual harassment accusations against him, a spokesman for the Agriculture Department said." Tooke's resignation comes in the wake of "PBS NewsHour" [report](#) which said that "the Agriculture Department was investigating sexual misconduct complaints against him, including that Mr. Tooke had relationships with subordinates before his appointment to the top role."

### **Democrats Offer Infrastructure Plan Paid For By Rolling Back Tax Cuts.**

The [Washington Times](#) (3/7, Sherfinski) reports that Senate Democrats on Wednesday offered a "\$1 trillion infrastructure plan that aims to address the nation's crumbling roads and bridges, saying it should be paid for by rolling back several key features of the GOP's \$1.5 trillion tax-cut law." While Democrats say the President's infrastructure proposal "isn't nearly enough to seriously address the country's needs," the Times points out that "any plan involving changes to the tax law as a pay-for is likely to be a nonstarter with the GOP."

***Budd Makes Case Against Funding For New York-New Jersey Rail Tunnel.*** In an op-ed for the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7), Rep. Ted Budd of North Carolina, argues against federal funding for the Gateway Program which would construct a rail upgrade between New York City and New Jersey.

### **ADP Report: "Red Hot" Job Market Growth Exceeding Expectations.**

[USA Today](#) (3/7, Davidson) reports "businesses added 235,000 jobs in February, payroll processor ADP said Wednesday, more than the 200,000 gains economists had expected." That "could possibly signal that a key employment report from the government will reveal more signs of strong hiring later this week." Mark Zandi, "chief economist of Moody's Analytics, which helps ADP compile the report," said yesterday, "The job market is red hot and threatens to overheat. ... With government spending increases and tax cuts, growth is set to accelerate." [Bloomberg News](#) (3/7, Dmitrieva) sees the data as "underscoring continued strengthening in the labor market," and the [AP](#) (3/7, Rugaber) and the AP says that "with unemployment already so low, strong hiring should force employers to offer much higher pay to find the workers they need."

[US News & World Report](#) (3/7, Sorgel) reported "February represents the third consecutive month that job gains totaled at least 230,000, based on ADP's statistics." It is also "the fourth straight month that employment gains hit at least 200,000 – a feat that hadn't been seen since the tail end of 2014." [CNBC](#) (3/7, Cox), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7, Hufford), and [Breitbart](#) (3/7, Carney), among other news outlets, run similar stories on the jobs data, while [HousingWire](#) (3/7, Ramirez) cautions that "because ADP often revises its numbers significantly, its reported job growth should be taken as a general direction of the market, but not a specific forecast of the number of jobs added on any given month."

***Fed Sees Wages Rising.*** [Bloomberg News](#) (3/7, Condon) reports the Fed's Beige Book found "a tight US labor market was helping lift wages across most of the country through late February and contributing to 'moderate inflation' in most areas." [Reuters](#) (3/7) reports the Fed also said that "overall, US economic activity expanded at a 'modest to moderate' pace in January and February and price gains were moderate." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7, Nunn, Chaney) also notes the Beige Book's findings.

### **Court Rejects Trump Administration's Plea To End Kids' Climate Lawsuit.**

[The Hill](#) (3/7, Cama) reports the Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit yesterday "rejected the Trump administration's attempt to dismiss a lawsuit filed by a group of kids who want to force the government to do more to fight climate change." The court "ruled that it would be premature to dismiss the case based on how burdensome the Trump administration believes the process of searching for documents and questioning people will be, a process called discovery." In their decision the three-judge panel wrote, "The defendants' argument fails because the district court has not issued a single discovery order, nor have the plaintiffs filed a single motion seeking to compel discovery. Rather, the parties have employed the usual meet-and-confer process of resolving discovery disputes."

[Reuters](#) (3/7, Stempel) reports the court "said the administration had not met the 'high bar' under federal law to dismiss the Oregon lawsuit, which was originally brought in 2015 against the administration of President Barack Obama." The possibly "far-reaching case is one of a handful seeking to have courts address global warming and its causes."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/7, Mooney) reports lead attorney and Our Children's Trust chief counsel Julia Olson said, "We're looking forward to putting the federal government on trial on climate science and its dangerous fossil fuel policies." The Department of Justice didn't "immediately respond to a request for comment on the court's ruling." The [Washington Examiner](#)



(3/7, Siegel) reports Our Children's Trust "claims the government, by propping up fossil fuels, has failed to address climate change on behalf of future generations, endangering their health and prosperity." The Examiner adds that "both the Trump and Obama administration argued the case threatens the separation of powers, contending that courts cannot rule on broad and speculative issues such as the impact of government policy on climate change." [Bloomberg News](#) (3/7, Mehrotra) also provides coverage of this story.

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

**"The Race-Based Mortgage Penalty."** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (3/7) laments the finding in a new study by the Center for Investigative Reporting that African-Americans and Latinos "were far more likely to be denied conventional mortgages than whites." The Times argues that these practices have perpetuated discrimination by not allowing lower income blacks and minorities to escape poverty, for which banks then punish them by not extending loans, and that "a destructive bill pending in the Senate would deepen this problem by exempting 85 percent of banks from reporting mortgage data that allows regulators and fair housing groups to ensure that home loans are being issued in a nondiscriminatory way." The Times also asserts that "a bill pending in the Senate would open the door for the mortgage industry to use an alternative credit-scoring system, which would be one step in the right direction."

**"Gary Cohn Joins The Exodus."** The [New York Times](#) (3/6) editorializes that "[i]n an administration filled with people with dubious ideas, limited experience and loads of ethical baggage," Cohn "was supposed to be among the sensible adults in the room. Now, he is leaving after failing repeatedly to be the stabilizing influence that the Trump administration sorely needed."

### Washington Post.

**"Trump Finally Say He'll Protect Elections. We'll Believe It When We See It."** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (3/7) expresses skepticism that President Trump will make good on his vow this week "to 'counteract'" any foreign meddling in US elections. The Post says Trump's "words are meaningless unless backed by actions, which, by many accounts, are still lacking."

**"A Muckraking Journalist Is Murdered In Slovakia."** The [Washington Post](#) (3/7) writes in an editorial about Slovakia's "combative" Prime Minister Robert Fico, who "has a track record of belittling rivals and critics" and who appears to be behind the murder last month of journalist Jan Kuciak, who "had been investigating ties between the Italian mafia and top officials" in Fico's government. The article describes the "outraged" reaction by Slovaks to the murder and the increasing challenges Fico is creating for himself as he calls for investigations of businessmen and state officials, including the country's president.

**"Why the Chesapeake Bay Is The Best In The World."** The [Washington Post](#) (3/7) editorializes about the "rebounding" of the Chesapeake Bay thanks to federal government conservation efforts over the last decade. The Post asserts that "sustained federal commitment is essential" to dealing with continued challenges in the Bay, including "significant oxygen-depleted dead zones, excessive nitrogen runoff, and other problems," as well as "farm pollution from fertilizer and manure." Although President Trump "has repeatedly insisted that he wants 'crystal clear water,'" he also "zeroed out the program in his budget," but, write the editors: "thankfully, Congress appears poised to maintain funding."

### Wall Street Journal.

**"Big Bank Custody Fight."** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7) editorializes that certain provisions in the Senate's bill to relax Dodd-Frank banking regulations may will make the financial system more vulnerable during a panic. The bill encourages banks to acquire municipal debt, which has historically been illiquid when investors panic. Moreover, the regulations would make banks and government more co-dependent by making it cheaper for states and cities to borrow. Finally, the bill proposes to alter the leverage ratio for custodial banks, but not in such a way that would safely encourage the risk-taking the economy needs.

**"Russia's Trail Of Poison."** A [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7) editorial says Russia is a natural suspect in the poisoning attack on former Russian intelligence officer Sergei Skripa and his daughter, and serves as further evidence of Moscow's brutal nature.

*“How A Trade War Escalates.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/7) says EU retaliation for President Trump’s steel and aluminum will predominantly hit GOP-led states, and expresses fear that Trump will respond by upping the ante even more. The Journal concludes by urging the President to negotiate with the EU, and seek a broad trade agreement with the bloc.

## Big Picture

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### Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

#### *Wall Street Journal:*

[GOP Lawmakers Sign Letter Objecting To New Tariffs](#)  
[Iran’s Oil Boom Is A No-show](#)  
[Ex-Russian Spy Poisoned By Nerve Agent, UK Police Say](#)  
[The Secretive Company That Pours America’s Coffee](#)

#### *Washington Post:*

[Trump’s Hard Line On Trade Goes Back Decades](#)  
[Trump To Offer Tariffs Break](#)  
[Fla. Lawmakers Pass Gun-Control Bill](#)  
[Mueller Probing Seychelles Meeting](#)  
[In The Ozarks, A Town Offers ‘Hispanics 101’ Course](#)

#### *Financial Times:*

[Economy And Defence Top Agenda For Saudi Crown Prince’s UK Visit](#)  
[European Stocks Send Early Warning Signal On Growth](#)  
[Temasek And GIC In Talks To Buy Chunk Of Salt Bae Steakhouse](#)  
[Coca-Cola To Launch Alcoholic Drink In Japan](#)

#### *Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:*

**ABC:** Severe Weather; Severe Weather-Travel; Weather Forecast; WH-Staff Turmoil; Trump-Porn Star; Alabama School Shooting; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; UK-Former Russian Spy Poisoned; Bomb Scare; Missouri Police Shooting; Chicago Traffic Accident; NBA Player-Florida School Visit.

**CBS:** Severe Weather; Severe Weather-Flooding; Weather Forecast; Trump-Porn Star; DOJ-Sanctuary Cities; Alabama School Shooting; WH-Tariff Policy; Tariff Policy-Public Reaction; UK-Former Russian Spy Poisoned; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; NBA Player-Florida School Visit; Amazon Alexa-Creepy Laugh; Football Players Charity.

**NBC:** Severe Weather; Trump-Porn Star; WH-Staff Turmoil; VA Hospital Controversy; Missouri Police Shooting; DOJ-Sanctuary Cities; Denver-Construction Fire; UK-Former Russian Spy Poisoned; Lottery Winner; NBA Player-Florida School Visit; Amazon Alexa-Creepy Laugh; Veteran-Paralympics.

#### *Network TV At A Glance:*

Severe Weather – 13 minutes, 35 seconds  
Trump-Porn Star – 8 minutes, 25 seconds  
UK-Former Russian Spy Poisoned – 4 minutes, 50 seconds

#### *Story Lineup From This Morning’s Radio News Broadcasts:*

**ABC:** Alabama School Shooting; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; WH-Tariff Policy; Severe Weather; Wall Street News.

**CBS:** Severe Weather; Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Alabama School Shooting; WH-Tariff Policy; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Florida School Shooting Aftermath; Alabama School Shooting; Rep Reelection Reconsideration; NBA Sex Abuse Investigation.

**NPR:** DOJ-Sanctuary Cities; Climate Change Lawsuit; WH-Security Clearance; Wall Street News.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today’s Events In Washington.



**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Holds a Cabinet meeting; hosts a roundtable with members of Congress and video game industry leaders.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — No public schedule announced.

**US Senate:** 9:30 AM Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on EUCOM – Hearing on 'United States European Command', with testimony from U.S. European Command Commander / NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm G50, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Maryland and Oregon governors testify to Senate HELP Committee hearing on the opioid crisis – Hearing on 'The Opioid Crisis: Leadership and Innovation in the States', with testimony from Maryland Governor Larry Hogan; and Oregon Governor Kate Brown Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm 430, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Environment and Public Works subcommittee legislative hearing – Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight Subcommittee legislative hearing on 'S. 2421, the Fair Agricultural Reporting Method Act', with testimony from Mortenson Ranch owner and operator Todd Mortenson; Delmarva Poultry Industry Executive Director Bill Satterfield; and Floyd County, IA, Supervisor Mark Kuhn Location: Rm 406, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://epw.senate.gov/public/>

10:00 AM Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Business Meeting, to consider pending legislation Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC [www.energy.senate.gov](http://www.energy.senate.gov)

2:00 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://intelligence.senate.gov>

2:15 PM Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on domestic violence and child abuse – Personnel Subcommittee hearing on 'Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in the Military', with testimony from Adrian Perry; Merci McKinley; Doorways for Women and Families' Iris Vega; Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness' Senior Policy Advisor Stephanie Barna; Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Principal Investigator Dr Casey Taft; Johns Hopkins School of Nursing Professor Dr Jacquelyn Campbell; and Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy Professor Dr Kenneth Dodge Location: Dirksen Senate Office Building, Rm G50, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

Dem Sen. Elizabeth Warren holds latest chamber floor speech on 'Senate's effort to deregulate big banks' – Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren holds latest in a series of speeches on the chamber floor this week against 'the Senate's effort to deregulate big banks 10 years after the financial crisis', today discussing 'repeating history of deregulating Wall Street and precipitating another financial crisis' \* The chamber is this week debating the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act – legislation which would roll back some of the regulations brought in by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.warren.senate.gov/>  
<https://twitter.com/SenWarren>

New Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform meets for the first time – Newly-formed Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform meets for the first time \* Committee was created by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, and tasked with identifying and recommending reforms to the budget and appropriations process. Co-chairs are House Committee on the Budget Chairman Steve Womack and House Committee on Appropriations Ranking Member Nita Lowey, with 16 members (eight from each party, eight from each chamber) – Republican Reps. Womack, Pete Sessions, Rob Woodall, and Jodey Arrington, Democratic Reps. Lowey, John Yarmuth, Lucille Roybal-Allard, and Derek Kilmer, Republican Sens. Roy Blunt, David Perdue, James Lankford, and Joni Ernst, and Democratic Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Michael Bennet, and Mazie Hirono Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://budget.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/housebudgetgop>

**US House:** 9:00 AM House Armed Services subcommittees joint hearing on 'Mobility and Transportation Command Posture' – Readiness Subcommittee and Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee joint hearing on 'Mobility and Transportation Command Posture', with testimony from U.S. Transportation Command Commander Gen. Darren McDew; and Maritime Administration Administrator Mark Buzby Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2118, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

9:00 AM House expected to vote on Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda expected to include completion of consideration of 'H.R. 1119 – Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act' Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

10:00 AM FDA and CDC heads testify to House Commerce subcommittee on seasonal influenza preparedness and response – Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining U.S. Public Health Preparedness for and Response Efforts to Seasonal Influenza', with testimony from Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb; CDC Acting Director Dr Anne Schuchat; Deputy Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Preparedness and Response and Biomedical Advances Research and Development Authority Director Dr Rick Bright; and NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Dr Anthony Fauci Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2123, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM American Kidney Fund Congressional breakfast briefing 'Women and Kidney Disease' – American Kidney Fund Congressional breakfast briefing 'Women and Kidney Disease' – held to honor World Kidney Day and International Women's Day – with speakers including Congressional Kidney Caucus co-chair / Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues member Democratic Rep. Suzan DelBene, a nephrologist, women who had kidney disease during pregnancy, a wife who donated her kidney to her husband, and a multi-generational family dealing with kidney failure and dialysis Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Washington, DC [www.kidneyfund.org](http://www.kidneyfund.org) <https://twitter.com/KidneyFund>

10:30 AM House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on Arlington National Cemetery – Military Personnel Subcommittee hearing on 'Arlington National Cemetery – Preserving the Promise', with testimony from Military Officers Association of America Associate Director of Government Relations Forrest Allen; The American Legion Deputy Director of Medical/Physical Evaluation Boards & Department of Defense Gerardo Avila; Veterans of Foreign Wars National Legislative Service Deputy Director John Towles; Air Force Association Senior Director of Government Relations Col. (Ret.) Keith Zuegel; Department of the Army Executive Director of Army National Military Cemeteries Karen Durham-Aguilera; and Arlington National Cemetery Superintendent Kate Kelley Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2212, Washington, DC [www.armedservices.house.gov](http://www.armedservices.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

10:30 AM Congressional Progressive Caucus lead press conference marking Minimum Wage Workers' Equal Pay Day – Congressional Progressive Caucus, Center for American Progress Action Fund, and Good Jobs Nation recognize Minimum Wage Workers' Equal Pay Day (1 Mar) via press conference, calling on Congress to 'increase the minimum wage for the first time in nearly a decade and reject President Donald Trump's heartless cuts to nutrition programs and other investments that minimum wage workers need just to make ends meet'. Speakers include Caucus members Democratic Reps. Raul Grijalva, Mark Pocan, James McGovern, Donald Norcross, and Tulsi Gabbard, CAP Poverty to Prosperity Program Vice President Rebecca Vallas, VoteVets Director of Government Relations Will Fischer, federal contract worker Cynthia Murphy, other Members of Congress, and other minimum wage workers Location: House Triangle, Washington, DC [cpc.grijalva.house.gov](http://cpc.grijalva.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/USProgressives>

New Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform meets for the first time – Newly-formed Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform meets for the first time \* Committee was created by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, and tasked with identifying and recommending reforms to the budget and appropriations process. Co-chairs are House Committee on the Budget Chairman Steve Womack and House Committee on Appropriations Ranking Member Nita Lowey, with 16 members (eight from each party, eight from each chamber) – Republican Reps. Womack, Pete Sessions, Rob Woodall, and Jodey Arrington, Democratic Reps. Lowey, John Yarmuth, Lucille Roybal-Allard, and Derek Kilmer, Republican Sens. Roy Blunt, David Perdue, James Lankford, and Joni Ernst, and Democratic Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Michael Bennet, and Mazie Hirono Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://budget.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/housebudgetgop>

**Other:** 12:00 PM CAP discussion on 'Upholding Women's Rights in the Resistance of President Trump's Global Gag Rule' – 'Upholding Women's Rights in the Resistance of President Trump's Global Gag Rule' Center for American Progress discussion, on 'the impact of President Donald Trump's Global Gag Rule roughly one year after its implementation'. Democratic Sen. Jeanne Shaheen keynotes, with panelists including Champions of Global Reproductive Rights President and CEO Suzanne Ehlers, WaterAid America Director of Policy and Advocacy Lisa Schechtman, and Embassy of Sweden Counselor for Development Emma Nilsson Location: Center for American Progress, 1333 H St NW, Washington, DC [www.americanprogress.org](http://www.americanprogress.org) <https://twitter.com/amprog>

DoJ Conference on opioids – Department of Justice conference, addressing the national opioid crisis and assessing the Bureau of Justice Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-based Program Location: Washington Marriott Wardman Park, 2660 Woodley Rd NW, Washington, DC

[www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov) <https://twitter.com/TheJusticeDept>

Democratic National Committee Winter Meeting – Democratic National Committee Winter Meeting, featuring caucus, council, and committee meetings, and training sessions. Speakers include Democratic Rep. Terri Sewell, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, Charlotte, NC Mayor Vi Lyles, Framingham, MA Mayor Yvonne Spicer, Stockton, CA Mayor Michael Tubbs, and DC Attorney General Karl Racine, among other local representatives Location: Washington Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, DC <http://www.democrats.org/> <https://twitter.com/TheDemocrats>

## Last Laughs

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### Late Night Political Humor.

**Jimmy Kimmel:** “The other storm ravaging the East Coast – specifically Washington, DC – is Stormy Daniels, the adult film star now suing the President.”

**James Corden:** “Adult film star Stormy Daniels is back, and this time she is suing Trump, claiming that a 2016 hush agreement preventing her from discussing their affair is invalid because – get this – Trump never signed it. This is amazing, mostly because it’s the first time Trump has ever not put his name on something.”

**James Corden:** “Donald Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner was sent to Mexico today to head up the United States delegation to meet with the Mexican President. When they heard Kushner was going to visit, Mexico announced that they are going to go ahead and put that wall up themselves.”

**Trevor Noah:** “Literally, just a few hours after [President Trump] declared Tuesday no-chaos, great-energy day, news broke that the counsel to the President – and evil Disney stepmom – Kellyanne Conway had apparently broken the law. ... I always thought Kellyanne Conway being on TV was a crime.”

**Jimmy Fallon:** “Last night, Trump’s top economic adviser, Gary Cohn, announced he’s resigning. At this point, so many staffers have quit that when you call the White House, Trump answers the phone himself. He’s like, ‘Hello, please hold, I’ll connect you. The President speaking.’”

**Jimmy Fallon:** “Here’s another story out of Washington that just came out. That in his agreement with adult film star Stormy Daniels, Trump actually used a fake name for himself: David Dennison. Trump is denying this. And referred all questions to his spokesman, David Dennison.”

**Seth Meyers:** “President Trump’s chief economic adviser, Gary Cohn, announced his resignation yesterday, which means Trump is now down to just one adviser.”

**Seth Meyers:** “A British trade official said today that the British government is very disappointed in President Trump’s proposed tariffs on steel and aluminum imports. And ‘very disappointed’ is a strong language for the British. In fact, it’s their highest level on the terror alert system.”

**Seth Meyers:** “In a new interview, Vladimir Putin said that he has no disappointment in President Trump. Putin even said he would happily vote for Trump again.”

**Conan O’Brien:** “Big story in the news. The porn star that claims she had an affair with the President is now suing him. Yeah. It is so weird, it’s almost as if we did elect a Clinton.”

**Conan O’Brien:** “The new Florida weapons bill would allow librarians to arm themselves. Now, in a related story, talking in Florida libraries is down 99 percent.”

**Jordan Klepper:** “Stormy Daniels is alleging Donald Trump paid her hush money. Lie number one – Trump doesn’t pay hush money; Donald Trump pays loud thunder money. Also, this lawsuit wants us to believe that President Donald Trump didn’t sign the agreement. Lie number two – Trump loves signing things. Executive orders, bills, Eric, see?”

**Samantha Bee:** “Guns don’t kill political careers, the NRA does. And lawmakers are scared stiff of

attack ads. ... The NRA is like a religion, specifically the best religion, Scientology. Now, look, I am not saying that Scientology and gun culture are exactly the same. For one, Scientology's got way better songs."

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**From:** Wynn, Todd  
**To:** [Albert Modiano](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Combs](#)  
**Subject:** DOI Reorg and Regional Boundary Update  
**Date:** Thursday, March 08, 2018 3:29:30 PM  
**Attachments:** [FAQ Reorg and Boundaries 2 22 18.pdf](#)  
[New Draft Unified Boundary Map 2 15 18.pdf](#)  
[Overall Reorg 2-pager.pdf](#)  
[Unified Regional Boundaries - one-pager.pdf](#)  
[DOI Bureaus Current Region Boundaries 2 22 18.pdf](#)

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Alby,

Great to chat with you today. Appreciate you making some time to meet with us. So, I realize what happened. I sent out a blast to a lot of folks around the country on reorg back in January. Since that time, I added you to our lists but I sent the follow up to the list I sent out back in January so I missed sending the update to you. Sincere apologies but better late than never. Below is what I sent out to folks a couple of weeks back. See the attachments that have the updated maps as well. Feel free to forward this along to anyone you know that may be interested.

Todd

In order to provide states and state partners with early, meaningful and substantive input on the development of U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) policies and initiatives, on January 11th and January 12th, DOI held briefing calls with Governors, local governments and stakeholders to discuss and solicit feedback regarding a draft map of DOI unified regional boundaries.

The discussion was focused on establishing unified regional boundaries for the Bureaus within the Department. On these calls, DOI discussed how these proposed boundary changes would reduce administrative redundancy, share resources more effectively, improve coordination among federal, state and local agencies, drive more decisions to be made at the regional level rather than in Washington DC and facilitate joint problem-solving.

Most importantly, as part of a clear and accountable process with states and state partners, DOI asked for feedback from Governors, local governments and stakeholders on the draft unified regional boundary map and concept and the greater process of reorganizing the Department of the Interior.

After receiving input from Governors, local governments and stakeholders, DOI has revised the draft unified regional boundary map and it is attached for your review. As

stated in previous communications, the original draft unified regional boundary map followed watersheds and ecosystems as the concept is to organize boundaries with common features and issues. As you will see, the new iteration of this draft map reflects the input and concerns raised regarding splitting states into multiple regions.

The new draft unified regional boundary map follows state lines, with few exceptions, but also follows the intent of these boundaries being organized along watersheds and ecosystems.

I have attached the latest draft unified regional boundary map, a map of the current DOI Bureau regional boundaries for context, a one page document outlining the need for unified boundaries, a two page outline of the goals of reorganization and next steps, and an updated FAQ. Hopefully these resources will answer some of the questions you may have regarding the unified regional boundary concept and the greater reorganization effort.

I cannot express this clearly enough. The U.S. Department of Interior values your input and feedback as we continue with this process. Please continue to send us ideas, thoughts, and concerns. Also, if you would like to set up a conference call or meeting to discuss in further detail, I am happy to help facilitate.

Todd

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*NOTE: Every email I send or receive is subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act.*

# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

## **Questions related to common regions**

### **1. Why is Interior changing long standing regional boundaries?**

A. We want to provide better management on a geographic basis to include critical components such as wildlife corridors, watersheds, and trail systems. The USGS has provided draft unified regional boundaries based on watersheds as a starting point. By having unified regional boundaries based on primarily on natural features like ecosystems and watersheds we can improve interagency coordination and citizen service, since all of our executives within a given region will have a shared frame of geographic reference.

Our objectives are to:

Reduce administrative redundancy and jurisdictional and organizational barriers to citizen service

Share resources more effectively

Devote a greater percentage of our budget to the field

Improve coordination among federal, state and local agencies

Facilitate joint problem-solving and effective decision-making

Make more decisions at the regional level, fewer in Washington DC

Increase responsibility, resources, personnel and authority in the field

### **2. Will all bureaus be affected by the new boundaries?**

A. Generally, yes, but there are exceptions. Since Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) are focused on activity in the marine environment, they will be the least affected. The US Geological Survey has research laboratories located in particular parts of the country, but they provide nationwide services because of specialized expertise and technology. We will consult with Indian tribes about the extent to which the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education should be part of the unified regions.

### **3. When will the new boundaries take effect?**

A. We expect the boundaries for the thirteen new unified regions will take effect in the second half of FY 2018.

### **4. Will there be a pilot of the new unified region concept? If so, where, when, and what will be its scope?**

A. The current idea is to launch the concept in Alaska first, since it is a large geographic area, most bureaus are active there, all existing regional offices are already in the same city, and there is only one state government with which to interact.

### **5. When is the unified region concept going to begin?**



# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

A. FY 2018, after we finish discussions with Congress, Governors, state and local elected leaders, tribes, and external stakeholders on the new regional boundaries.

## **6. When will the unified regions be fully implemented?**

A. It will take several years, because there are a lot of details that will need to be worked out over time.

## **7. Will DOI break existing leases for office space?**

A. Generally not, since we want to avoid any extra financial costs that may be associated with breaking existing leases.

## **8. When will the new regional hub cities be identified?**

A. Perhaps as soon as the end of FY 2018, or more likely in FY 2019.

## **9. Has DOI spoken to General Services Administration (GSA) about what the new regional hub cities will be?**

A. We have had a few very preliminary discussions, simply to get an idea about the range of available space costs and space availability in a few western cities. We don't plan any moves in FY 18.

## **10. Who will be in charge of each unified region?**

A. There will be an Interior Regional Director who will have lead responsibility for each unified region.

## **11. What will be the scope of responsibilities for each Interior Regional Director?**

A. The responsibilities will be to coordinate a specified set of mission and administrative functions that are common to more than one bureau within the region. While some functions such as NEPA compliance, permitting, and recreation management may be within the purview of all of the Interior Regional Directors nationwide, many responsibilities will likely vary from region to region, as a function of the work of the bureaus within a given region.

## **12. Will the Interior Regional Director control all decisions of all bureaus in the unified region?**

A. No, only matters involving more than one bureau, as established on a region-by-region basis.

## **12A. Will the Interior Regional Director just be another layer of bureaucracy?**

A. No, our intention is to short-circuit much of the traditional Washington DC-based bureaucracy, by giving the Interior Regional Director direct access to the Deputy Secretary. In addition, the Interior Regional Director will only be involved when a matter involves more than one bureau.

## **13. Will the unified regions lead to closing of any national parks, national wildlife refuges, national fish hatcheries, or BIA agency offices?**

A. No. There will be little to no impact on these types of local offices that are tied to specific natural or cultural resources or Indian tribes.

# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

## **14. How will the new DOI unified regional boundaries affect other agencies like USFS, NMFS, EPA, and the Army Corps of Engineers?**

A. We will invite other agencies to co-locate with us or designate liaison officers to each of our unified regions.

## **15. What will be the role of bureau directors and assistant secretaries after the reorganization?**

A. Bureau directors and assistant secretaries will continue to have authority over national policy, budget, personnel, training, uniforms, workforce planning and related functions, as well as line authority over mission areas that are unique to particular bureaus.

## **16. How will the new regional boundaries affect relationships with States and Counties?**

A. We expect these relationships will be improved since more decisions will be made at the regional level and not elevated to Washington DC for resolution.

## **17. How will the new regional boundaries affect relationships with Indian tribes?**

A. We expect these relationships will be improved since more decisions will be made at the regional level and not elevated to Washington DC for resolution.

## **18. Will there be tribal consultations before the new boundaries are finalized?**

A. Yes. We will develop a schedule for conducting formal tribal consultation during FY 2018.

## **19. Isn't it a problem if a single state is split into more than one unified region?**

A. In most cases, a state is only within one of the unified regions. The exceptions are where there are overriding natural resource management benefits from having part of a state in a second region.

## **20. Will front line supervisors in bureau field offices report to a different boss as a result of the new regional boundaries?**

A. No, however the Interior Regional Director for the unified region will be the ultimate regional decision maker for many bureau employees.

## **21. How will the new regional boundaries affect how employees do their jobs every day in the field?**

A. The new boundaries should have very little impact on field operations, except that field level employees can expect more leadership support for taking steps to coordinate more closely with employees in their sister bureaus or other federal agencies that affect our mission in the field. There will also be less second-guessing of local decisions by officials in Washington DC.

## **22. If the Interior Regional Director is not from my bureau, how can he or she make responsible decisions affecting my program?**

A. The Interior Regional Director will consider the advice of each bureau's chain of command within the unified region.

# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

**23. Has the Department established standard operating procedures, MOAs, chains of command or organization charts on how the current structure will work within the new regional map?**

A. We plan to work with current bureau regional directors and bureau leadership to determine the most effective and reasonable ways to operationalize the new approach. Any changes will need to be carefully identified and thoughtfully implemented. We expect that the arrangements may vary from region to region.

**24. Would regional changes affect any statutory responsibilities?**

A. We do not anticipate the need to change any bureau's statutory authorizations as a result of implementing unified regions.

**25. Does the Department expect each bureau to be represented in each region? How will this work for bureaus that have limited or no responsibilities in a region (e.g. OSM in the insular region)?**

A. We do not expect that every bureau will have a bureau regional director in each new region; we will let existing programmatic responsibilities be the determining factor in that regard.

**26. What authority will the new Interior Regional Director in a unified region have with respect to the existing structure? Will the new Interior Regional Director be the responsible officer for construction projects, records, procurement, and other activities conducted by staff currently located in another regional office? How will this work? For example, if a current project or program is in the NPS Midwest Region, managed out of Omaha, and the project now is in the DOI Great Lakes-Ohio region, where would the management happen?**

A. In general, activities or functions common to more than one bureau will be under the direction of the Interior Regional Director in that region. For major projects that are already underway it may be prudent to make exceptions on a case-by-case basis. As existing office space leases expire, staff associated with a regional office function will gradually migrate to the identified regional hub city in each newly designated region. That process may take years to play out, as some leases will not expire for another decade.

**27. What if the project, agreement or plan was previously within one region, but is now split between two or more regions?**

A. In these situations, the region that is designated the lead region will be the one whose staff and expertise is best positioned to bring the project, agreement, or plan to a successful completion.

**28. How will the Department manage existing MOAs and MOUs with other agencies at existing regions?**

A. Decisions to transfer the lead responsibility for a MOU or MOA with another agency will be made on a case-by-case basis. Considerations will include whether the agreement is geographic or programmatic in scope, and which of the new unified regions has the personnel or expertise in the best position to effectively implement the agreement.

# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

**29. Considering most DOI bureaus have less than 13 regions, this would increase the number of managers. Would this require hiring more managers?**

A. During the first year or so transition period it is more likely that a single executive might have responsibilities in more than one region. Over time, it is likely that the total number of bureau regional directors will increase so that all regions where a bureau has a significant presence have a senior manager located in that region. However, some of the new regional directors might be GS-15s or GS-14s as opposed to SESers, if their bureau's presence in the new region is relatively minor.

**30. Do you expect an official in a current regional office to be responsible for more than one region? How would the chain of command work for this?**

A. It is possible that during the transition period a single senior executive might have more than one supervisor. However, field offices of bureaus will only report to one individual.

**31. Does this initiative require the reassignment of any personnel (e.g., will current Regional Director positions be changed)?**

A. Generally no. We will want to make sure that there is eventually one Interior Regional Director in place in each region, and more broadly, that there is at least one SESer in each region. In one or two instances, that may involve the near-term change in duty station of someone now in the SES.

**32. Who will serve as Interior Regional Directors for these new regions? Will this affect their position description? If there are multiple virtual bureau Regional Directors within a new Region, to whom will existing staff report?**

A. Interior Regional Directors will most probably be career members of the SES. They will have position descriptions created that describe their responsibilities within the new region. Their particular responsibilities and therefore their position description may vary a bit from region to region as a function of the DOI work that is taking place within each region. Bureaus will continue to have bureau Regional Directors and their bureau field level chains of command will continue to report to them. The difference will be for mission areas or administrative functions that are common to more than one bureau within the same unified region, the people in the bureaus working in those mission areas or administrative functions will take direction from the Interior Regional Director. Supervisors in individual bureaus will continue to report to a Regional Director from that bureau. The Regional Directors will report to the Interior Regional Director for certain specified programmatic and administrative activity, and to their bureau director in headquarters on those matters not within the scope of responsibilities of the regional leader.

**33. How will the bureau Regional Directors coordinate with counterparts in other bureaus in the same region?**

A. Bureau Regional Directors will have their traditional authorities and upward reporting relationships for programs and functions not specified as being within the purview of the Interior Regional Director. For those programs and functions that they share with other bureaus within that region, they can and

# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

should coordinate with each other, but they will be ultimately responsible to the regional leader within that region.

## **34. How will the bureau Regional Directors coordinate with other bureau Regional Directors within their same bureau?**

A. Bureaus will continue to have routine meeting of headquarters and regional leadership, and coordinate with each other routinely in order to accomplish their missions.

## **35. How will a bureau deal with stakeholders (including state and tribal governments) that were previously within one region, but now are split between two or more virtual regions?**

A. Tribal governments will have one BIA Regional Director and one Interior Regional Director with whom they might interact, depending on the issue. In some cases, a state may find itself in more than one of the new regions. While at first blush that might seem problematic, decades of experience in the Bureau of Reclamation and Army Corps of Engineers indicates that the arrangement works.

## **36. The new regional boundaries map appears to split-up some Indian reservations. How does DOI plan on working with tribes that span two regions?**

A. We believe we have made successfully adjusted the new regional boundaries so that Indian reservations, national parks, national wildlife refuges, federal reservoirs, or similar land management unit are in just one of the new regions. If we have somehow failed to accomplish that goal in a particular place, we would like to know about it so we can address the situation.

## **37. As this is a policy decision affecting tribes, will DOI consult with tribes on this under EO 13175?**

A. Yes, DOI plans to consult with tribes before BIA and BIE are incorporated into the new regional management concept and the new regional boundaries. This may mean that BIA and BIE would be involved in the reorganization on a separate, more extended timeline, than the other bureaus.

## **38. As these regions were designed to address ecosystem-based management, how would this reorganization address tribal needs and help DOI fulfill trust responsibilities?**

A. Indian reservations exist in unique geographic areas, and while the topography within large reservations may span more than one ecosystem, a management perspective that is based on natural features and regional control rather than administrative boundaries with primary reporting relationships to Washington DC should result in better decisions for everyone, Indian and non-Indian, living in a geographic area.

## **39. What administrative simplicity would be achieved by using state-line based boundaries? Do the administrative benefits of using state lines apply equally to all agencies?**

# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

A. The basic idea behind the new regional boundaries was to try to draw them based on ecosystem and physiographic features. Watersheds are well-defined and well-recognized natural features that serve as a reasonable approximation for ecosystems, hence the new regional boundaries closely approximate watershed boundaries. However, Governors, state and local leaders, and external stakeholders are much more accustomed to dealing with state boundaries than watershed boundaries, so for convenience the new regional watershed-based boundaries are often adjusted to line up with the nearest state boundaries.

## **General Reorganization Questions**

### **40. Will the broader DOI reorganization happen all at once?**

A. No, it will be phased out over several years so there is ample time for planning, feedback from Governors, Congress, and other state and local partners, and thoughtful implementation.

### **41. Will employees be forced to change their official duty stations?**

A. No. Our preference is to gradually phase in any necessary geographic reassignment of personnel to minimize disruption to the current workforce. People most likely to be affected will be those in agency headquarters offices in the Washington DC metropolitan area. People working in field offices are the least likely to be affected.

### **42. Will people lose their jobs due to the reorganization?**

A. Our desire is for no one to lose their job as a result of the reorganization. Some fraction of the small number of people who are given new assignments in a different geographic area may choose to voluntarily leave Interior instead.

### **43. Will DOI run a Reduction In Force (RIF) to accomplish the reorganization?**

A. We have absolutely no plans to run a RIF.

### **44. Will there be early outs and buyouts to facilitate the reorganization?**

A. To the extent OMB and OPM authorize us to use early outs and buyouts we may consider doing so.

### **45. Will people be required to move to a different city or state as part of the reorganization?**

A. Some people will eventually be asked to move.

### **46. Will bureau headquarters functions be moved as a result of the reorganization?**

A. The FY19 President's budget proposes to move a small number of headquarters positions in BLM and FWS Westward to an as yet unidentified location in order to gradually establish western headquarters for those agencies. In addition, a few more headquarters positions in the Bureau of Reclamation, whose headquarters is largely already in the Denver metropolitan area, will be moved to that city.

### **47. Will everyone in the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) headquarters be required to move out West?**

# Frequently Asked Questions about the DOI Reorganization

*Updated as of 2-20-2018*

A. No, although over a period of years we expect to move the majority of FWS headquarters functions out West. In FY 2019, perhaps about 50 people in FWS headquarters would move West.

## **48. Will everyone in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) headquarters be required to move out West?**

A. No, although over a period of years we expect to move the majority of BLM headquarters functions out West. In FY 2019, perhaps about 50 people in BLM headquarters would move West.

## **49. How many people in BLM will stay in the Washington DC headquarters, and in what functional areas?**

A. We plan on consulting with BLM about what makes sense, but generally speaking, people working in functions like budget, Congressional relations, and external relations will be among those not moving West.

## **50. How many people in FWS will stay in the Washington DC headquarters, and in what functional areas?**

A. We plan on consulting with FWS about what makes sense, but generally speaking, people working in functions like budget, Congressional relations, and external relations will be among those not moving West.

## **51. How much money is going to be spent on the reorganization in FY 2018?**

A. In FY 2018 we do not plan to spend significant amounts of money on the reorganization. Instead, we will start off by operating virtual common regions.

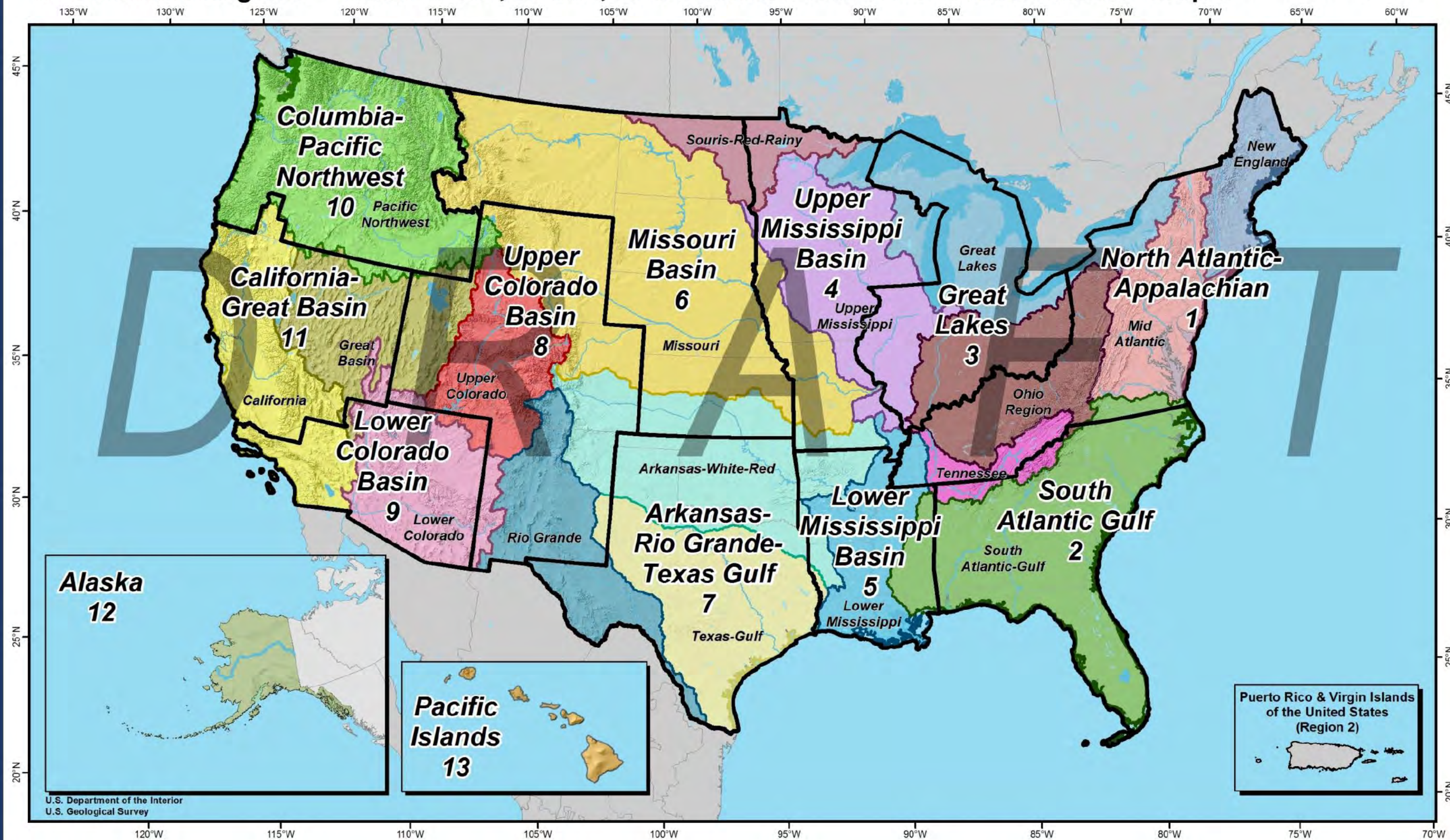
## **53. How much money is in the President's budget for Interior to be spent on the reorganization in FY 2019?**

A. The President's Budget for FY 2019 includes \$17.5 million for the reorganization. Of this amount, \$5M is associated with moving part of the BLM headquarters West, another \$5M with moving part of the FWS headquarters West, \$2.5M with consolidated some staff from multiple bureaus in the same building in Anchorage, Alaska, \$3M with moving more of the Bureau of Reclamation headquarters to the Denver metropolitan area, and the remaining \$2M to potentially relocate a small number of people to unified regional offices.





# 13 Common Regions - Watersheds, States, and Counties with HUC-2 Watersheds - Map 5 *As of February 15, 2018*





# **DOI: Planning for the Next 100 Years**

## **Objectives:**

### ***Address President's Executive Order 13781 on Reorganization***

- Reduce administrative redundancy and jurisdictional and organizational barriers to citizen service
- Share resources more effectively
- Devote a greater percentage of our budget to the field
- Improve coordination among federal, state and local agencies
- Facilitate joint problem-solving and effective decision-making
- Make more decisions at the region, fewer in Washington DC
- Better stewardship
- Increasing responsibility, resources, personnel and authority in the field

## **Current DOI Operations:**

### ***DOI touches more people, in more ways, than any other organization in the Executive Branch***

- 2,400 operating locations
- 70,000 employees
  - 16% of DOI employees are retirement eligible today
  - 40% of DOI employees are retirement eligible in 5 years
- 610,000 volunteers

## **Organizational Challenges:**

- Coordination challenges across agency jurisdictions
- Coordination challenges across departments
  - FWS Trout
  - NMFS Salmon
- Overlapping organizational structures
- Unnecessary bureaucracy in DC and Denver
- Heavy visitor use
  - 500 Million DOI Visitors
  - 320 Million NPS site visitors

## **Unified Regions:**

### ***Why?***

- Focuses regional managers on a shared geography
- Improves coordination and communication
- Increases efficiency
- Lowers costs
- Leverages available expertise across bureaus

- Promotes teamwork
- Facilitates local multi-agency partnerships
- Better stewardship
- Increases authority, resources, and staff to the field
- Focuses on local and regional issues and infrastructure improvements

**What this would accomplish:**

- Improve federal land and water management
- Unified regions to facilitate mission delivery
- One-stop services for public
- Enhanced partnerships among federal, state, tribal and local agencies
- Reduce conflict across jurisdictional boundaries
- Demonstrate the courage of Roosevelt to organize for a better public lands future

**Next Steps:**

- We are consulting with Congress, tribes, and state and local partners and other stakeholders on launching the unified regions in FY18
- Continuing to consult with employees
- Seeking employee help to capture the benefits of this approach and avoid pitfalls

# Department of the Interior | Proposed Draft Unified Regional Boundaries

## Background:

- The Trump Administration is exploring organizational efficiency and effectiveness through Executive Order 13781, which required the submission of reorganization plans to the President.
- DOI submitted reorganization proposals to the Office of Management and Budget in September of 2017.
- An element of the reorganizational proposal contemplates establishing 13 unified regional office boundaries across all DOI bureaus.
- DOI currently has 10 bureaus and 40 distinct regions, each operating with unique regional boundaries.
- This disparate geographic focus inhibits the sharing of resources and discourages a shared frame of geographic reference, resulting in operational and administrative inefficiencies.

## Complexity of Managing Public Lands:

The complexity of administering DOI programs has expanded dramatically over time as Congress broadened DOI's statutory duties. As its mission and bureaus grew, so have competing interests and priorities between bureaus and offices. To fulfill DOI's diverse purpose, the Department manages:

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| • 530 Million Acres – Surface                 | • 2,400 operating locations |
| • 700 Million Acres – Subsurface minerals     | • 70,000 employees          |
| • 1.7 Billion Acres – Outer Continental Shelf | • 610,000 volunteers        |
| • 25 million Acre-Feet of water supply        |                             |

## Unified Region Objectives:

- Reduce administrative redundancy;
- Clarify jurisdictional and organizational barriers to citizen service;
- Facilitate resource sharing, facilitate joint problem solving, and efficient decision-making;
- Devote a greater percentage of our budget to the field;
- Improve coordination among federal, state and local agencies;
- Delegate decision making authority to the regions.

## Science-Based Rationale for New Unified Regions:

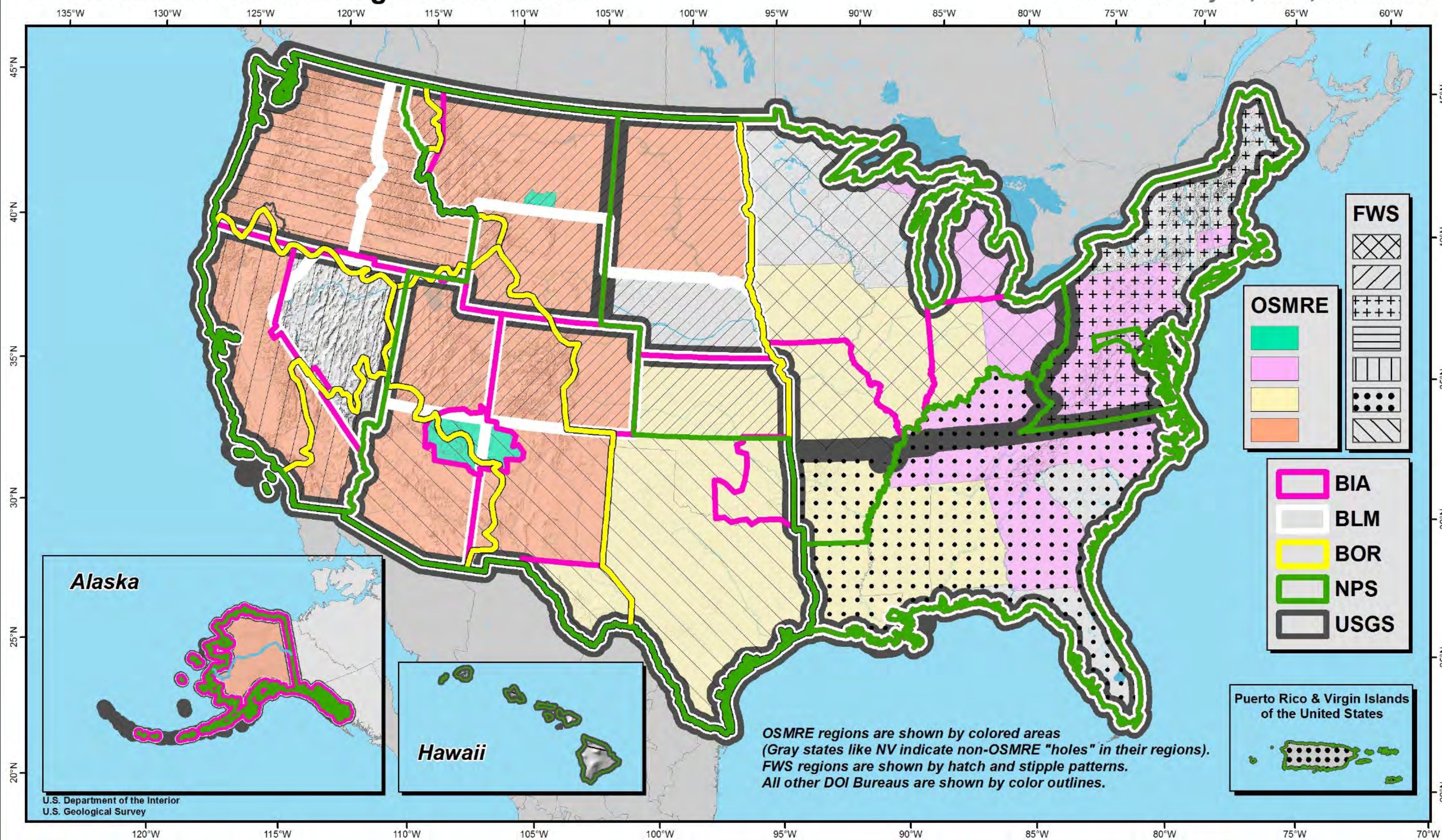
- The proposed unified regional boundaries are primarily based on a science-based approach to promote management efficiencies.
- A science-based approach to the boundaries will enable better management of watersheds, wildlife corridors, and trail systems. Indian reservations, national parks, and other significant DOI land management units that cross watersheds were kept wholly in same region to promote efficiency.
- We are consulting with DOI's career senior executive staff, Congress, and external stakeholders on the most useful way to adjust the final science-based boundaries for the unified regions to ensure the boundaries are also administratively practical.





# DOI Bureaus - Current Region Boundaries

As of February 20, 2018; 4:30 PM ET





# Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

Thu Jan 25, 2018

## 11am - 11:30am Susan Combs- HR Briefing

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 6126

**Calendar:** Natalie Davis

**Who:** Natalie Davis, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

## 2pm - 3pm Ethics Briefing

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** OS-OCIO Magnolia Conference Room 7013 MIB

**Calendar:** Oluwarotimi Abimbola

**Who:**

Edward McDonnell, Scott Currie, OS-OCIO Magnolia Conference Room 7013 MIB, David Lacroix, Natalie Davis, Oluwarotimi Abimbola, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

## 3pm - 4pm Meeting with Jim Cason and Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 6113

**Calendar:** James Cason

**Created by:** Gareth Rees

**Who:** James Cason, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

## 4:55pm - 5pm Check-In for South West Flight

**Calendar:** Oluwarotimi Abimbola

**Who:** Susan Combs, Oluwarotimi Abimbola

**Going?** Yes

Fri Jan 26, 2018

## 9:15am - 9:45am Scott C here

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

## 10am - 10:30am Google Training for Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar:** Oluwarotimi Abimbola

**Who:** Jacqueline Worrell, Oluwarotimi Abimbola, Susan Combs, Lauren Kaminski

**Going?** Yes

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 11am - 12pm Reorganization meeting

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Where: 5160 MIB or (b) (5) (b) (5)

Calendar: Elena Gonzalez

Who:

Michael Hershfeld, Brendan Berve, Christina Summers, John Bockmier, John Kosovich, Kevin Gallagher, Scott Cameron, James Cason, Olivia Ferriter, Susan Combs, Elena Gonzalez

Going? Yes

### 12pm - 1pm Brown Bag Lunch

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Where: 6120 Conf Rm

Calendar: Catherine Gulac

Who: Susan Combs, Catherine Gulac, Gareth Rees, David Bernhardt

Going? Yes

Mon Jan 29, 2018

### 3pm - 4pm Assistant Secretaries Weekly Meeting

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Where: Conf Rm 6120

Calendar: Gareth Rees

Created by: Jean Parrish

Who:

Gary Lawkowski, Andrea Travnicek, James Cason, John Bockmier, Amanda Kaster, Downey Magallanes, Roslyn Sellars, David Bernhardt, Laura Rigas, Katie Mills, Susan Combs, Lori Mashburn, John Tahsuda, Douglas Domenech, Todd Willens, Catherine Callaway, Marlon Duke, Tracie Lassiter, Tameka Lewis-Robinson, Thomas Irwin, Joseph Balash, Timothy Williams, James Voyles, Micah Chambers, Timothy Petty, Daniel Jorjani, Jason Larrabee, Brenda Burman, Scott Cameron, Todd Wynn, Katharine MacGregor, Matthew Dermody, Gareth Rees, Mariagrazia Caminiti, Benjamin Cassidy

Going? Yes

### 4:15pm - 4:30pm Reorganization Discussion - BLM IT

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Where: Room 6126

Calendar: Jean Parrish

Who: Susan Combs, Jean Parrish, Sylvia Burns, Elena Gonzalez

Going? Yes

Tue Jan 30, 2018

### 10am - 11am Megan Olsen

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 1pm - 1:45pm Mtg per tanner fifth 5160

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)



## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 1pm - 2pm Weekly Politicals Meeting

**Where:** Secretary's Conference Room- 5160

**Calendar:** Natalie Davis

**Who:**

Alex Hinson, Aurelia Skipwith, Gavin Clarkson, Greg Sheehan, Brendan Quinn, Gary Lawkowski, Brian Pavlik, Brandon Middleton, Susan Combs, Todd Willens, Brian Steed, Blake Deeley, Vincent Devito, Wesley Bullock, Russell Newell, Alan Mikkelsen, Casey Hammond, William Dove, Aaron Thiele, Marshall Critchfield, Heather Swift, Amanda Kaster, Idavis@osmre.gov, Caroline Boulton, John Tahsuda, Jason Funes, David Bernhardt, Rick May, Matthew Dermody, Leila Getto, Katie Mills, Richard Goeken, Cally Younger, Christine Bauserman, Paul (Dan) Smith, Andrea Travnicek, Christopher Stolte, Elinor Werner, Joseph Balash, Jason Larrabee, Gary Lawkowski, Kathleen Benedetto, Kyle Scherer, Michael Argo, Steven Smith, James Cason, Steven Howke, Brenda Burman, Benjamin Cassidy, John Tanner, Cally Younger, Thomas Baptiste Micah Chambers, Todd Wynn, James Schindler, gregory\_sheehan@fws.gov, Shirley Lewis, Ryan Nichols, Douglas Domenech, Laura Rigas, Daniel Jorjani, Zachariah Gambill, Eli Nachmany, Austin Ewell, Scott Hommel, John Bockmier, David Mihalic, Russell Roddy, Virginia Johnson, Downey Magallanes, Kyle Scherer, Timothy Petty, Lacey Smethers, Scott Angelle, Preston Beard, Stephen Wackowski, Timothy Williams, Joshua Campbell, James Voyles, Charles Laudner, Scott Cameron, Lori Mashburn, Katharine MacGregor

**Going?** Yes

**Wed Jan 31, 2018**

### 8am - 8:30am Rom 1327 per Peyton

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 10:30am - 11am TANNER and other John

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 11:30am - 12:30pm Mtg. with Joshua Johnson

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar:** Audrey Haskins

**Who:**

Audrey Haskins, jjohnson@bdiwins.com Susan Combs - (b) (6) Susan Combs, John Tanner

**Going?** Yes

### 1:15pm - 2pm BisonConnect Training

**Where:** Susan Combs office

**Calendar:** Jacqueline Worrell

**Who:** Jacqueline Worrell, Lauren Kaminski, Susan Combs, Oluwarotimi Abimbola

**Going?** Yes

### 3pm - 4pm Reorganization

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6126

**Calendar:** Edward Keable

**Who:** Susan Combs, Edward Keable, Raymond Limon

**Going?** Yes

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

**5pm - 6pm Library swearing in Tim petty**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Thu Feb 1, 2018**

**4:30am - 5am (No title)**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C St NW, Washington, DC 20240, USA  
**Going?** No

**9:30am - 10:30am RZ bison bistro**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**11:15am - 12:05pm On-Boarding - Records Management Briefing**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Susan's Office - Room 6126

**Calendar:** Oluwarotimi Abimbola

**Who:** David Alspach, Oluwarotimi Abimbola, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

**12pm - 1pm Sbarb**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**2pm - 3pm DOI Employee Town Hall**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** DOI Auditorium

**Calendar:** James Cason

**Created by:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** Susan Combs, James Cason

**Going?** Yes

**Fri Feb 2, 2018**

**9am - 9:30am Meeting to discuss QuickTime**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 6126

**Calendar:** Margaret Bradley

**Who:** Susan Combs, Margaret Bradley

**Going?** Yes

**11:30am - 12:30pm Lunch**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

**1:45pm - 2:45pm Discussion regarding common regional boundaries**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Mike will call Susan Combs office at 1-202-208-4482

**Calendar:** Todd Wynn

**Who:** Todd Wynn, Susan Combs, mike.mcgrady1@wyo.gov

**Going? Yes**

**2:30pm - 3:30pm Meet with Ray on HR**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Susan's Office

**Calendar:** Raymond Limon

**Who:** Susan Combs, Raymond Limon

**Going? Yes**

**4:45pm - 5:45pm Brenda BOR**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Mon Feb 5, 2018**

**10am - 11am Review Regional Maps With Susan Combs**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar:** Kevin Gallagher

**Who:** John Kosovich, Brendan Berve, Susan Combs, Kevin Gallagher

**Going? Yes**

**2pm - 3:30pm \*\*Quarterly DHS Cyber Liaison Meeting w/David Robinette\*\***

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:**

1849 C ST NW, 7TH FL, WING #1, Rm 7013 or DIAL IN: (b) (5)

PC: (b) (5)

OS-OCIO Magnolia Conference Room 7013 MIB

**Calendar:** Sylvia Burns

**Created by:** Cynthia Figueroa-Lugaro

**Who:**

Bruce Downs, Benjamin Liberty, Sylvia Burns, Kris Caylor, Susan Combs, Louis

Eichenbaum, OS-OCIO Magnolia Conference Room 7013 MIB, Lawrence Ruffin, Oluwarotimi

Abimbola, david.robinette@hq.dhs.gov, mark.kneidinger@hq.dhs.gov, Alvin Foster

**Going? Yes**

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 3pm - 4pm Assistant Secretaries Weekly Meeting

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Conf Rm 6120

**Calendar:** Gareth Rees

**Created by:** Jean Parrish

**Who:**

Joseph Balash, Timothy Williams, Daniel Jorjani, Katie Mills, John Tahsuda, Brenda Burman, Micah Chambers, John Bockmier, Downey Magallanes, Lori Mashburn, Marlon Duke, Mariagrazia Caminiti, Andrea Travnicek, Jason Larrabee, Matthew Dermody, Gareth Rees, Scott Cameron, Douglas Domenech, David Bernhardt, Roslyn Sellars, Susan Combs, James Cason, Tracie Lassiter, Laura Rigas, Todd Willens, Catherine Callaway, Katharine MacGregor, Todd Wynn, James Voyles, Gary Lawkowski, Timothy Petty, Amanda Kaster, Tameka Lewis-Robinson, Thomas Irwin, Benjamin Cassidy

**Going?** Yes

### 4pm - 4:30pm Meet with Susan Combs - Susan's office (Room 6126)

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar:** Greg Sheehan

**Who:** Susan Combs

### 4:30pm - 5pm SLC Reorg Read-Out

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6120

**Calendar:** James Voyles

**Who:** Todd Wynn, Susan Combs, James Voyles, John Tanner, Catherine Gulac

**Going?** Yes

### 5pm - 6pm Christine

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 5pm - 5:30pm Meet with Christine

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Susans Office

**Calendar:** Christine Bauserman

**Who:** Christine Bauserman, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

Tue Feb 6, 2018

### 8am - 8:30am Cindy Carfaro foia

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 9am - 10am Energy Information and IT Integration Discussion

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Susan's Office - MIB Rm 6126

**Calendar:** Greg Gould

**Who:** Susan Combs, Greg Gould, Kimbra Davis, Scott Cameron

**Going?** Yes

### 10:30am - 11:30am Rick may

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 1pm - 1:45pm Mtg per tanner fifth 5160

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 1pm - 2pm Weekly Politicals Meeting

**Where:** Secretary's Conference Room- 5160

**Calendar:** Natalie Davis

**Who:**

Matthew Dermody, Gavin Clarkson, Katharine MacGregor, James Cason, Brendan Quinn, Andrea Travnicek, Timothy Williams, Lori Mashburn, Micah Chambers, Scott Angelle, Brian Pavlik, Russell Newell, Brian Steed, David Bernhardt, Caroline Boulton, Douglas Domenech, Casey Hammond, Gary Lawkowski, Scott Hommel, Blake Deeley, Gary Lawkowski, Idavis@osmre.gov, Christine Bauserman, Russell Roddy, Amanda Kaster, Todd Wynn, Elinor Werner, Timothy Petty, Jason Funes, Kathleen Benedetto, gregory\_sheehan@fws.gov, James Schindler, Brandon Middleton, Benjamin Cassidy, Michael Argo, Susan Combs, Aurelia Skipwith, John Tanner, Leila Getto, Charles Laudner, William Dove, Alex Hinson, Marshall Critchfield, David Mihalic, Lacey Smethers, John Bockmier, Laura Rigas, Scott Cameron, Greg Sheehan, Virginia Johnson, Joseph Balash, Steven Smith, Katie Mills, Richard Goeken, Joshua Campbell, John Tahsuda, Thomas Baptiste, Eli Nachmany, Downey Magallanes, Vincent Devito, Paul (Dan) Smith, Todd Willens, Heather Swift, Alan Mikkelsen, James Voyles, Jason Larrabee, Zachariah Gambill, Ryan Nichols, Cally Younger, Daniel Jorjani, Kyle Scherer, Austin Ewell, Rick May, Shirley Lewis, Christopher Stolte, Aaron Thiele, Brenda Burman, Steven Howke, Cally Younger, Preston Beard, Wesley Bullock, Kyle Scherer, Stephen Wackowski

**Going?** Yes

### 2:15pm - 3:15pm (b) (6)

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 4pm - 5pm Reorg Support - IT Security Briefing

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** OS-OCIO Sweet Gum Conference Room 7115 MIB

**Calendar:** Sylvia Burns

**Who:**

Susan Combs, Sylvia Burns, Elena Gonzalez, OS-OCIO Sweet Gum Conference Room 7115 MIB, Richard Cardinale

**Going?** Yes

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

Wed Feb 7, 2018

**8:30am - 9:30am Coffee**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**10am - 10:30am Columbia and Snake River Call**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Conf Call Lin (b) (5) PC (b) (5)

**Calendar:** Brenda Burman

**Created by:** Evann Rogers

**Who:** Susan Combs, Brenda Burman, Timothy Petty, Lorri Gray

**Going?** Yes

**10:30am - 11am Reorg Talking Points**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Susan's Office

**Calendar:** James Voyles

**Who:** James Voyles, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

**3:15pm - 3:30pm Meet Greg Gould ONRR**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6613

**Calendar:** Joseph Balash

**Created by:** Joseph Hayes

**Who:** Joseph Balash, Susan Combs, Greg Gould

**Going?** Yes

**3:30pm - 3:45pm Catherine Nolan. Scott c**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Thu Feb 8, 2018

**12:30pm - 1pm Db maps**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**1:30pm - 2pm Meeting w/Susan Combs**

**Where:** A-ASIA 4159, MIB 1849 C St NW, Wash., DC 20240

**Calendar:** John Tahsuda

**Created by:** Anita Personius

**Who:** John Tahsuda, Susan Combs, Willow Iron Cloud

**Going?** Yes

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

Fri Feb 9, 2018

**9:30am - 10:30am Western Caucus with OCL (reorg update and ASWS intro)**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** The U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, First St NE, Washington, DC 20515, USA

**Calendar:** John Tanner

**Who:**

Timothy Petty, Andrea Travnicek, James Voyles, John Tanner, Todd Wynn, Susan Combs, Austin Ewell

**Going?** No

**11:30am - 12pm Susan Combs & Jim Cason - Maps**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6113

**Calendar:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** James Cason, Susan Combs, Catherine Gulac

**Going?** Yes

**12:30pm - 1pm Meeting with Susan Combs**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 5153

**Calendar:** Vincent Devito

**Created by:** Gisella Ojeda-dodds

**Who:** Susan Combs, Vincent Devito

**Going?** Yes

**3:30pm - 4:30pm Briefing with PMB**

**Where:** 6114

**Calendar:** David Bernhardt

**Created by:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:**

Gary Lawkowski, Edward Keable, Scott Cameron, David Bernhardt, Raymond Limon, Jean Parrish, Donna Riley, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

Mon Feb 12, 2018

**2pm - 2:20pm Kurth**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**3pm - 4pm Assistant Secretaries Weekly Meeting**

**Where:** Conf Rm 5160

**Calendar:** Gareth Rees

**Created by:** Jean Parrish

**Who:**

Marlon Duke, Joseph Balash, John Bockmier, Douglas Domenech, David Bernhardt, Susan Combs, Mariagrazia Caminiti, Katie Mills, Tracie Lassiter, Lori Mashburn, John Tahsuda, Todd Willens, Daniel Jorjani, Catherine Callaway, Gareth Rees, Jason Larrabee, Roslyn Sellars, Gary Lawkowski, Matthew Dermody, Tameka Lewis-Robinson, Timothy Petty, Scott Cameron, Downey Magallanes, Brenda Burman, Thomas Irwin, James Cason, James Voyles, Todd Wynn

**Going?** Yes



## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

Tue Feb 13, 2018

**2:15am - 3:15am CIO etc**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**9:30am - 10am Chat with Susan Combs**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 5662

**Calendar:** Yolando Mack-Thompson

**Who:** Michael Nedd, Susan Combs, Ursula Massey, Yolando Mack-Thompson

**Going?** Yes

**1pm - 2pm Weekly Politicals Meeting**

**Where:** Secretary's Conference Room- 5160

**Calendar:** Natalie Davis

**Who:**

Brenda Burman, John Tahsuda, Katie Mills, Brandon Middleton, Kathleen Benedetto, Alan Mikkelsen, Eli Nachmany, Timothy Williams, Christine Bauserman, Brendan Quinn, Aaron Thiele, Casey Hammond, Laura Rigas, Thomas Baptiste, James Schindler, Katharine MacGregor, Leila Getto, John Tanner, David Bernhardt, Richard Goeken, Downey Magallanes, Michael Argo, Christopher Stolte, Jason Larrabee, Andrea Travnicek, Joshua Campbell, Zachariah Gambill, gregory\_sheehan@fws.gov, Blake Deeley, Todd Wynn, Brian Steed, Kyle Scherer, Micah Chambers, Cally Younger, Rick May, Russell Newell, Russell Roddy, Ryan Nichols, Cally Younger, Scott Angelle, Lacey Smethers, Kyle Scherer, James Cason, Paul (Dan) Smith, Preston Beard, Steven Howke, Amanda Kaster, Gavin Clarkson, Gary Lawkowski, Heather Swift, Daniel Jorjani, Stephen Wackowski, Jason Funes, Matthew Dermody, Scott Cameron, Caroline Boulton, Virginia Johnson, Austin Ewell, Marshall Critchfield, John Bockmier, Douglas Domenech, Alex Hinson, James Voyles, Aurelia Skipwith, Elinor Werner, Scott Hommel, Wesley Bullock, Greg Sheehan, Shirley Lewis, Todd Willens, Idavis@osmre.gov, David Mihalic, Timothy Petty, Gary Lawkowski, Charles Laudner, Susan Combs, Vincent Devito, Brian Pavlik, Benjamin Cassidy, Joseph Balash, Steven Smith, Lori Mashburn, William Dove

**Going?** Yes

**2:15pm - 3:15pm CIO**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**3:30pm - 4pm WEA DOI Discussion**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Conference room 6023

**Calendar:** Todd Wynn

**Created by:** Valerie Smith

**Who:** Susan Combs, ksgamma@westernenergyalliance.org, Todd Wynn

**Going?** Yes

Wed Feb 14, 2018

**All day Valentine's Day**

Wed Feb 14, 2018 - Thu Feb 15, 2018

**Calendar:** Holidays in United States

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

**8:30am - 8:55am Ray Limon**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**9:30am - 11am**

**Monthly Meeting with Assistant Secretaries, Directors, & Advisors**

**Where:** 5160 Conference Room

**Calendar:** Ryan Zinke - (b) (6)

**Created by:** Leila Getto

**Who:**

Douglas Domenech, Daniel Jorjani, Laura Rigas, Elinor Werner, David Bernhardt, Scott Hommel, Scott Cameron, Michael Argo, Paul (Dan) Smith, John Tahsuda, Brenda Burman, Todd Wynn, James Cason, Gareth Rees, Lori Mashburn, Timothy Petty, Joseph Balash, Greg Sheehan, Downey Magallanes, Jason Larrabee, Vincent Devito, Scott Angelle, Brian Steed, Steven Howke, Susan Combs, Todd Willens, Leila Getto, Aaron Thiele, Rick May, John Tanner

**Going?** Yes

**3:30pm - 4pm Susan Combs**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6113

**Calendar:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** Susan Combs, Catherine Gulac, James Cason

**Going?** No

**Thu Feb 15, 2018**

**10:30am - 11am Mtg re reorganization**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Fri Feb 16, 2018**

**7am - 7:05am Arrive DOI**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**7:30am - 8:30am Brenda Burman**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**9am - 9:30am Meet with Susan Combs**

**Where:** Ms. Combs' office 6126

**Calendar:** Paul (Dan) Smith

**Created by:** Janice DeSordi

**Who:** Paul (Dan) Smith, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

**9:30am - 9:45am Susan Combs & Jim Cason - It contracting**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6113

**Who:** Catherine Gulac, James Cason

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 10am - 10:30am Check-in with Suzan Combs

**Where:** Room 6114  
**Calendar:** David Bernhardt  
**Created by:** Gareth Rees  
**Who:** David Bernhardt, Susan Combs  
**Going? Yes**

**Mon Feb 19, 2018**

### All day Presidents' Day (regional holiday)

Mon Feb 19, 2018 - Tue Feb 20, 2018  
**Calendar:** Holidays in United States

**Tue Feb 20, 2018**

### 11am - 12pm Communication Strategy for Reorg Plan

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 6210  
**Calendar:** Scott Cameron  
**Created by:** Jean Parrish  
**Who:**  
Susan Combs, Todd Wynn, IEA\_Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Downey Magallanes, Jason Funes, Shandria Dixon, Jeffrey Hunter, Russell Newell, Timothy Petty, Heather Swift, Timothy Williams, Laura Rigas, Benjamin Cassidy, Scott Cameron, John Tanner  
**Going? Yes**

### 1pm - 2pm Weekly Politicals Meeting

**Where:** Secretary's Conference Room- 5160  
**Calendar:** Natalie Davis  
**Who:**  
Joseph Balash, Katharine MacGregor, Paul (Dan) Smith, Steven Howke, Todd Wynn, Marshall Critchfield, Brian Pavlik, Leila Getto, Alex Hinson, Timothy Petty, Brenda Burman, Thomas Baptiste, Brandon Middleton, Aaron Thiele, Cally Younger, Charles Laudner, Daniel Jorjani, Lori Mashburn, Preston Beard, Kyle Scherer, gregory\_sheehan@fws.gov, James Voyles, David Bernhardt, Eli Nachmany, Timothy Williams, Christopher Stolte, Virginia Johnson, Heather Swift, Stephen Wackowski, Lacey Smethers, Russell Newell, Alan Mikkelsen, Douglas Domenech, Scott Angelle, John Bockmier, Kyle Scherer, Matthew Dermody, Scott Hommel, Shirley Lewis, Kathleen Benedetto, Laura Rigas, Amanda Kaster, William Dove, Joshua Campbell, Ryan Nichols, Blake Deeley, Jason Larrabee, Christine Bauserman, Rick May, Zachariah Gambill, Katie Mills, John Tahsuda, Casey Hammond, Gavin Clarkson, Brian Steed, James Schindler, Scott Cameron, Aurelia Skipwith, Michael Argo, Todd Willens, John Tanner, Micah Chambers, David Mihalic, Elinor Werner, Greg Sheehan, Gary Lawkowski, Downey Magallanes, Richard Goeken, Idavis@osmre.gov, Jason Funes, Susan Combs, Steven Smith, Brendan Quinn, Cally Younger, Caroline Boulton, Wesley Bullock, James Cason, Gary Lawkowski, Benjamin Cassidy, Austin Ewell, Andrea Travnicek, Vincent Devito, Russell Roddy  
**Going? Yes**

**Wed Feb 21, 2018**

### 9am - 9:45am HR Data Demo Review

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 4313  
**Calendar:** Raymond Limon  
**Who:** Susan Combs, Raymond Limon, Martin Pursley, Christopher Lawson  
**Going? Yes**

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

**10am - 10:15am**

**DOI Reorganization Briefing to MRBIR (Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable) SES-Level Group**

**Where:** Call-in information; (b) (5) Access code: (b) (5)

**Calendar:** knapp@udall.gov

**Created by:** Susan Combs

**Who:** Susan Combs, Timothy Williams, Mitch Chrismer

**Going?** Yes

**12pm - 1pm Lunch the exchange**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**3pm - 4pm Susan and Sylvia Sync Up**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** OS-OCIO Magnolia Conference Room 7013 MIB

**Calendar:** Sylvia Burns

**Who:**

Richard Cardinale, Oluwarotimi Abimbola, Sylvia Burns, Susan Combs, Joy Nicholopoulos, OS-OCIO Magnolia Conference Room 7013 MIB

**Going?** Yes

**Thu Feb 22, 2018**

**9am - 10am Everglades Restoration Model**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Susan: 202-208-4482

**Calendar:** Shannon Estenoz

**Created by:** Tina Moeinian

**Who:** Susan Combs, Shannon Estenoz

**9am - 10am Shannon**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**11am - 12pm IBC Briefing**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6126

**Calendar:** Michele Singer

**Who:** Susan Combs, Joy Nicholopoulos

**Going?** Yes

**12:45pm - 1:30pm Wynn Tanner**

**Video call:**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

Mon Feb 26, 2018

### 11am - 11:30am LAKE Interagency Conversation

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Calendar: Lizette Richardson

Who: Lizette Richardson, Susan Combs, Adam Kelsey

Going? Yes

### 2:30pm - 3pm Susan Combs pre-Alaska travel Reorg discussion

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Where: John Tanner's office

Calendar: John Tanner

Who: Laura Rigas, Susan Combs, Todd Wynn, John Tanner

Going? Yes

Tue Feb 27, 2018

### 1pm - 1:45pm Mtg per tanner fifth 5160

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 1pm - 2pm Weekly Politicals Meeting

Where: Secretary's Conference Room- 5160

Calendar: Natalie Davis

Who:

Matthew Dermody, Caroline Boulton, Timothy Petty, John Tahsuda, John Tanner, Gary Lawkowski, Leila Getto, Andrea Travnicek, Kathleen Benedetto, gregory\_sheehan@fws.gov, Todd Willens, Gavin Clarkson, Daniel Jorjani, Joshua Campbell, Todd Wynn, Shirley Lewis, Brandon Middleton, Joseph Balash, Douglas Domenech, Heather Swift, Micah Chambers, Virginia Johnson, Idavis@osmre.gov, Kyle Scherer, Gary Lawkowski, Katie Mills, Vincent Devito, Downey Magallanes, Ryan Nichols, Brenda Burman, Wesley Bullock, Thomas Baptiste, Brian Pavlik, Alex Hinson, Stephen Wackowski, Charles Laudner, Eli Nachmany, James Voyles, Christine Bauserman, Casey Hammond, Aurelia Skipwith, Benjamin Cassidy, Kyle Scherer, Scott Angelle, Preston Beard, Russell Newell, Jason Funes, Susan Combs, Amanda Kaster, Greg Sheehan, Lori Mashburn, David Bernhardt, Michael Argo, Marshall Critchfield, Alan Mikkelsen, Laura Rigas, David Mihalic, Brian Steed, Austin Ewell, Aaron Thiele, Steven Smith, Russell Roddy, Zachariah Gambill, James Schindler, Timothy Williams, Brendan Quinn, Rick May, Lacey Smethers, Cally Younger, Scott Hommel, Jason Larrabee, Cally Younger, Katharine MacGregor, Elinor Werner, John Bockmier, James Cason, Blake Deeley, William Dove, Richard Goeken, Steven Howke, Christopher Stolte, Scott Cameron, Paul (Dan) Smith

Going? Yes

Wed Feb 28, 2018

### 11:30am - 12:15pm BOEM brief w/ Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Where: BOEM's 5th Floor ORD small conference room, 3801 Centerpoint Dr., Anchorage, AK

Calendar: Stephen Wackowski

Created by: Lesia Monson

Who: Susan Combs, James Kendall, Stephen Wackowski

Going? Yes

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 12:45pm - 1:30pm BSEE brief with Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** BSEE office, 4th floor, 3801 Centerpoint Drive, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:**

Susan Combs, Mark Fesmire, Stephen Wackowski, Shenista Carpenter, Kevin Pendergast, Guy Hayes

**Going? Yes**

### 1:15pm - 1:45pm Andy Mack - AK DNR

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** BSEE office, 4th floor, 3801 Centerpoint Drive, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Who:**

Stephen Wackowski, Kevin Pendergast, andy.mack@alaska.gov, Susan Combs, Lesia Monson

**Going? Yes**

### 2pm - 2:30pm Tour of Anchorage Interagency Dispatch Center w/ Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** BLM Campbell Creek Field Office, Dispatch Center

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Stephen Wackowski, Susan Combs, Jerrid Palmatier, Gary Baumgartner

**Going? Yes**

### 4pm - 5pm Kent S. BLM/Susan C. lunch meeting at BLM

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** BLM cafeteria, open seating

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:**

Ted Murphy, Kent Slaughter, Stephen Wackowski, Karen Mouritsen, Eileen Frost, Susan Combs

**Going? Yes**

### 5:30pm - 7pm

**BLM & Susan Combs -- Alaska Biweekly Meeting with Stephen Wackowski**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** BLM-AK SD Bridgeport 1 907 271 3319, BLM-AK SD State Directors Conference Room

**Calendar:** Eileen Frost

**Who:**

Susan Combs, Karen Mouritsen, BLM-AK SD State Directors Conference Room, Ted Murphy, Eileen Frost, BLM-AK SD Bridgeport 1 907 271 3319, Stephen Wackowski

**Going? Yes**

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 7pm - 8pm NPS brief w/ Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** NPS Director's office, 240 W. 5th Ave., Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Joel Hard, Susan Combs, Yolanda Tankersley, Stephen Wackowski, Herbert Frost

**Going?** Yes

### 8pm - 9pm OAS brief with Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** OAS office, 4405 Lear Court, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Stephen Wackowski, Susan Combs, Kevin Fox

**Going?** Yes

Thu Mar 1, 2018

### 1pm - 2pm ANILCA Title 12 briefing for Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** OS-AK, Steve's office, 4230 University Drive, Suite 300, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Susan Combs, Stephen Wackowski, sgibert@aol.com, Tina Cuning

**Going?** Yes

### 2pm - 2:30pm SOL brief with Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Ken's office or Steve's office

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Stephen Wackowski, Susan Combs, Kenneth Lord

### 3pm - 3:45pm FWS brief w/ Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** FWS Director's office, 1011 E. Tudor Rd, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Susan Combs, Greg Siekaniec, Karen Clark, Stephen Wackowski

**Going?** Yes



## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 5pm - 6pm AK Congressional Staff/Susan Combs/Steve Wackowski

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** DOI OS-AK, Steve's office, 4230 University Dr., Suite 300, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:**

renee\_reeve@sullivan.senate.gov, Leila\_Kimbrell@murkowski.senate.gov, chad.

padgett@mail.house.gov, Stephen Wackowski, sara\_taylor@sullivan.senate.gov, Susan Combs

**Going? Yes**

### 6:30pm - 7:30pm BIA brief with Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** BIA, 3601 C Street, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Lynn Polacca, Bryan Bowker, Vanessa Peterson, Susan Combs, Stephen Wackowski

**Going? Yes**

**Fri Mar 2, 2018**

### 12pm - 1pm OEPC brief with Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** OS-AK, 4230 University Drive, Suite 300, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Philip Johnson, Bryan Arroyo, Susan Combs, Stephen Wackowski, Grace Cochon

**Going? Yes**

### 3pm - 3:30pm USGS brief w/ Susan Combs

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** USGS offices, 4210 University Drive, Anchorage, AK

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Susan Combs, Stephen Wackowski, Durelle Smith, Aimee Devaris

**Going? Yes**

**Sat Mar 3, 2018**

### All day 2018 National Association of Counties (NACo)

Sat Mar 3, 2018 - Sun Mar 4, 2018

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Washington Hilton, 1919 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009, USA

**Calendar:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** James Cason, Catherine Gulac, Susan Combs

**Going? No**

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 9am - 10am Public Lands Steering Committee - Resolutions Meeting

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** International Ballroom West, Concourse Level / Columbia 11 & 12, Terrace Level ??

**Calendar:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** Catherine Gulac, Susan Combs, James Cason

**Going?** No

### 10am - 11am Natl Assn counties attend. Jim speak

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

### 2pm - 5pm BLM Iditarod Trail Tent at Campbell Tract airstrip

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** BLM Campbell Tract airstrip, 4700 BLM Rd, Anchorage, AK 99507

**Calendar:** Stephen Wackowski

**Created by:** Lesia Monson

**Who:** Susan Combs, Stephen Wackowski

**Going?** Yes

Sun Mar 4, 2018

### 9pm - 10pm Dinner 49th still brewing co

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Mon Mar 5, 2018

### 3pm - 4pm Assistant Secretaries Weekly Meeting

**Where:** Conf Rm 6120

**Calendar:** Gareth Rees

**Created by:** Jean Parrish

**Who:**

Todd Willens, Thomas Irwin, Timothy Petty, Todd Wynn, Joseph Balash, John Bockmier, Downey Magallanes, James Cason, Daniel Jorjani, Scott Cameron, Catherine Callaway, Roslyn Sellars, Douglas Domenech, Lori Mashburn, Susan Combs, Brenda Burman, John Tahsuda, Gareth Rees, Tameka Lewis-Robinson, Jason Larrabee, Matthew Dermody, James Voyles, David Bernhardt, Mariagrazia Caminiti, Tracie Lassiter, Katie Mills, Marlon Duke, Gary Lawkowski

**Going?** Yes

Tue Mar 6, 2018

### 8am - 9am Joy re hr procurement it and Ses folder

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

**10am - 10:45am**

**External Meeting - w/Wyoming County Commissioner re: Reorganization**

**Video call:**

**(b) (5), (b) (6)**

**Where:** 6023 Conf Rm

**Calendar:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** Susan Combs, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Todd Wynn, Timothy Williams, Catherine Gulac

**Going? Yes**

**1pm - 1:45pm Mtg per tanner fifth 5160**

**Video call:**

**(b) (5), (b) (6)**

**1pm - 2pm Weekly Politicals Meeting**

**Where:** Secretary's Conference Room- 5160

**Calendar:** Natalie Davis

**Who:**

Daniel Jorjani, gregory\_sheehan@fws.gov, Brian Steed, Micah Chambers, Kyle Scherer, Joseph Balash, Caroline Boulton, Brendan Quinn, Cally Younger, William Dove, James Voyles, Lacey Smethers, Leila Getto, Paul (Dan) Smith, James Schindler, Richard Goeken, Preston Beard, Jason Funes, Alan Mikkelsen, Scott Angelle, Gavin Clarkson, Timothy Williams, Todd Wynn, Shirley Lewis, Greg Sheehan, Laura Rigas, Amanda Kaster, Aurelia Skipwith, Russell Newell, Stephen Wackowski, Austin Ewell, Elinor Werner, John Bockmier, Heather Swift, Kathleen Benedetto, Christopher Stolte, Scott Hommel, Douglas Domenech, Rick May, Aaron Thiele, James Cason, Wesley Bullock, Brenda Burman, Russell Roddy, Cally Younger, Kyle Scherer, Lori Mashburn, Downey Magallanes, Susan Combs, Todd Willens, Brian Pavlik, David Mihalic, Benjamin Cassidy, Joshua Campbell, Steven Smith, Katie Mills, Andrea Travnicek, Zachariah Gambill, Casey Hammond, Christine Bauserman, Alex Hinson, Blake Deeley, Matthew Dermody, Katharine MacGregor, Virginia Johnson, Steven Howke, Vincent Devito, Michael Argo, Jason Larrabee, Idavis@osmre.gov, Scott Cameron, Marshall Critchfield, Thomas Baptiste, Timothy Petty, Charles Laudner, Ryan Nichols, Brandon Middleton, John Tahsuda, David Bernhardt, Eli Nachmany, Gary Lawkowski, John Tanner, Gary Lawkowski

**Going? Yes**

**2pm - 3pm Politicals Briefing on International Affairs and Travel**

**Video call:**

**(b) (5), (b) (6)**

**Where:** Room 5160 MIB

**Calendar:** Douglas Domenech

**Who:**

Alexander Sterhan, Rick May, Amanda Kaster, David Bernhardt, Casey Hammond, Brandon Middleton, James Schindler, Greg Sheehan, Heather Swift, Steven Howke, Joshua Campbell, Paul (Dan) Smith, Thomas Baptiste, Michael Argo, Todd Wynn, Daniel Jorjani, Jason Funes, Ryan Nichols, Lori Mashburn, Joseph Balash, Laura Rigas, Preston Beard, David Mihalic, Brian Steed, Christine Bauserman, Natalie Davis, Susan Combs, Aaron Thiele, Katie Mills, Idavis@osmre.gov, Matthew Dermody, Timothy Petty, John Tahsuda, Scott Cameron, Wesley Bullock, Richard Goeken, Caroline Boulton, Alan Mikkelsen, John Bockmier, Elinor Werner, Benjamin Cassidy, Lacey Smethers, Downey Magallanes, Leila Getto, Christopher Stolte, William Dove, Marshall Critchfield, Andrea Travnicek, Charles Laudner, Todd Willens, Brenda Burman, Scott Angelle, Zachariah Gambill, Gary Lawkowski, Kathleen Benedetto, Russell Newell, Aurelia Skipwith, Douglas Domenech, James Cason, Vincent Devito, Brian Pavlik, Scott Hommel, Cally Younger, Austin Ewell, Jason Larrabee, Blake Deeley, Steven Smith, John Tanner, Timothy Williams, Eli Nachmany, Katharine MacGregor, Alex Hinson, Micah Chambers, James Voyles, Kyle Scherer, Evan Wilson, Stephen Wackowski

**Going? Yes**

## Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

### 4pm - 5pm Reorg. Discussion with BLM

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 6126

**Calendar:** Scott Cameron

**Created by:** Jean Parrish

**Who:**

John Tanner, Audrey Haskins, Brian Steed, Susan Combs, Scott Cameron, Yolando Mack-Thompson

**Going? Yes**

Wed Mar 7, 2018

### 9am - 10am

**Briefing (Steve, Joy Nicholopoulos and Susan Combs) to discuss FWS Skyline GSA lease and how the move from Ballston - Rm 3357**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 3357

**Calendar:** Stephen Guertin

**Created by:** Thomas Irwin

**Who:**

Stephen Guertin, Joy Nicholopoulos, Brian Bloodsworth, Charisa Morris, Janine Velasco, Kristin Young, Susan Combs

**Going? Yes**

### 9am - 10am

**Meet with FWS re. JAO and Skyline lease/move from Ballston (Steve Guertin's Ofc #3357)**

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar:** Joy Nicholopoulos

**Who:** Joy Nicholopoulos, Susan Combs

**Going? Yes**

### 11am - 12pm American Farm Bureau

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Conference 6023

**Calendar:** Timothy Williams

**Who:**

Timothy Williams, Todd Wynn, Jason Funes, ryany@fb.org, Susan Combs, Benjamin Cassidy

**Going? Yes**

### 2pm - 3pm Reorg. Discussion with FWS

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Room 6126

**Calendar:** Scott Cameron

**Created by:** Jean Parrish

**Who:** Greg Sheehan, Susan Combs, Audrey Haskins, John Tanner, Thomas Irwin, Scott Cameron

# Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

Thu Mar 8, 2018

## 9:30am - 10:30am Briefing and Discussion on Reorg. with OMB

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 1849 C Street NW - OCL Conference Room 6023

**Calendar:** Scott Cameron

**Created by:** Jean Parrish

**Who:**

Abigail Miller, ccrutchfield@omb.eop.gov, Denise Flanagan, Olivia Ferriter, Scott Cameron, Susan Combs, emma\_k\_roach@omb.eop.gov

**Going?** Yes

## 9:30am - 10:30am Omb here

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

## 11am - 12pm Lunch / Andrew & Susan (UNCLASSIFIED)

**Where:** MIB

**Calendar:** andrew.d.goodrich2.civ@mail.mil

**Created by:** Susan Combs

**Who:** Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

## 2pm - 3pm Mtg Re reorg USOGA

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

## 2pm - 3pm USOGA Meeting

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6023 conf room

**Calendar:** Todd Wynn

**Who:** Susan Combs, Todd Wynn

**Going?** Yes

## 3pm - 4pm Reorg meeting with BLM

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6126 MIB

**Calendar:** Scott Cameron

**Who:** Susan Combs, John Tanner, Joy Nicholopoulos, Evan Wilson, Scott Cameron, Brian Steed

**Going?** Yes

## 4:30pm - 5pm Susan Combs - Field vs Office Data

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** 6113

**Calendar:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** James Cason, James Voyles, Susan Combs, Catherine Gulac

**Going?** Yes

# Susan Combs, Holidays in United States

Fri Mar 9, 2018

9am - 10am FOUA

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

10am - 10:30am FBMS Briefing

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Where:** Breckenridge VTC / MIB: 4241 VTC, BIO-CR-Denver Breckenridge (VTC)

**Calendar:** Peter Gabel

**Who:**

BIO-CR-Denver Breckenridge (VTC), Olivia Ferriter, Megan Olsen, Joy Nicholopoulos, Scott Cameron, Martin Quinlan, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

1:30pm - 2pm Internal Meeting - Susan Combs & Jim Cason

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar:** Catherine Gulac

**Who:** James Voyles, Catherine Gulac, James Cason, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes

2:30pm - 3pm ECEP discussion

Video call:

(b) (5), (b) (6)

**Calendar:** Christopher Stolte

**Who:** Joshua Campbell, Christopher Stolte, Susan Combs

**Going?** Yes



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September 22, 2017

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(415) 644-6959 FAX  
Ellen.Richmond@mto.com

Clarice Julka  
1849 C Street, NW  
Mail Stop MS-7328  
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request: External Communications of Ryan Zinke, David Bernhardt, James Cason, Scott Cameron, and Susan Combs

Dear FOIA Officer:

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, *as amended* ("FOIA"), from Sierra Club, a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments.

## REQUESTED RECORDS<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Records" means information of any kind, including writings (handwritten, typed, electronic or otherwise produced, reproduced or stored), letters, memoranda, correspondence, notes, applications, completed forms, studies, reports, reviews, telephone conversations, faxes, emails, documents, photographs, minutes of meetings, recordings of meetings in any form, and any other compilation of data from which information can be obtained. All of the foregoing are included in this request if they are in the possession of or otherwise under the



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Sierra Club requests Records of the following type in the possession, custody, or control of the U.S. Department of Interior ("DOI") for the time period starting from **January 23, 2017, through the date of your search for records in response to this request**, related to the following individuals (the "DOI Personnel"):

- A. Secretary of the Interior **Ryan Zinke**
  - B. Deputy Secretary of the Interior **David Bernhardt**
  - C. Associate Deputy Secretary of the Interior **James Cason**
  - D. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget **Scott Cameron**
  - E. Assistant Secretary for Policy Management, and Budget **Susan Combs**
1. All emails, text messages, faxes, voice mails, and other form of communications from, or to, the DOI Personnel with any person outside of DOI, as well as any phone logs or other indices which memorialize communications with such persons.
  2. All calendars, whether electronic or in paper format, of the DOI Personnel for the above listed time period.
  3. All sign-in sheets or other records memorializing attendance at any meetings with the DOI Personnel for the above-listed time period at which a person outside of DOI was in attendance.
  4. All emails, faxes, voicemails, text messages or other forms of communication that have been deleted that fit the above specifications and have been deleted, but remain recoverable in any way. If fulfilling this specification requires additional time, we would ask that production of documents meeting specifications 1-3 be given priority and processed separately from any potential responsive records to this specification.

For purposes of this request, the term "person outside of DOI" means any person who is **not** an employee within the DOI, subject to the following exclusions: We are **not** seeking communications to or from persons employed elsewhere within the Executive or Legislative Branches of the United States; persons employed by the executive branch of any state (*i.e.*, state agencies); or persons who have an executed contract to provide consulting or other services to DOI. You may also specifically exclude from processing and release any records that are publicly available (*e.g.*, through regulations.gov).

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control of DOI, including its National Headquarters and all of its Offices or subdivisions.

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In previous FOIA requests dated May 5, May 22, and August 24, 2017 (DOI tracking numbers OS-2017-00524, OS-2017-00599, and OS-2017-01092) Sierra Club sought Secretary Zinke's travel and meeting records during a May trip to Utah, certain correspondence with David Bernhardt, and certain correspondence to and from Secretary Zinke on the issue of national monument boundaries and management. Any materials that have been provided in response to those prior FOIA requests are excluded from the present request.

Sierra Club acknowledges that the DOI FOIA website contains visitor logs for DOI headquarters.<sup>2</sup> The visitor logs posted on the website are excluded from this request. Sierra Club does, however, request all other records reflecting the DOI Personnel's meetings and other communications with persons outside of DOI. The DOI FOIA website also contains a version of Secretary Zinke's calendar that is redacted,<sup>3</sup> as well as redacted versions of the Secretary's travel logs.<sup>4</sup> Sierra Club requests copies of Secretary Zinke's calendar and travel logs for the period specified above that contain no redactions other than redactions of phone numbers or conference dial-in information.

This request includes communication related to DOI that is or was on any system or device, computer, phone, smartphone, tablet, email account, cloud, server or other communication system either **personal or business** that is or was owned or operated by the DOI Personnel or otherwise established for the purposes of communicating with the DOI Personnel.

This request includes all emails or other communications from any **personal** account operated by DOI Personnel which have been forwarded into a DOI government email account.

This request applies to all email accounts assigned to or operated by the DOI Personnel, whether on an official DOI email address or server or not, that relate to official business of DOI. This request applies to so-called "alias" email accounts that may or may not include the name of the DOI Personnel in the email address.

### **EXEMPT RECORDS**

If you determine that portions of the records requested are exempt from disclosure, we request that you segregate the exempt portions and deliver the non-exempt portions of such records to my attention at the address below within the statutory time limit. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b).

If DOI denies all or part of this request, please cite the specific exemptions you believe justify

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.doi.gov/foia/os/doi-headquarters-visitor-logs>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.doi.gov/foia/os/secretarial-schedules>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.doi.gov/foia/os/os-foia-library-travel-records>.

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your refusal to release the information and notify us of your appeal procedures available under the law.

### **FORMAT OF REQUESTED RECORDS**

Under FOIA, you are obligated to provide records in a readily-accessible electronic format and in the format requested. *See, e.g.,* 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(3)(B) (“In making any record available to a person under this paragraph, an agency shall provide the record in any form or format requested by the person if the record is readily reproducible by the agency in that form or format.”).

We request all records in an electronic .pdf format that is text searchable and OCR formatted. Additionally, please provide the records either in (1) load-ready format with a CSV file index or excel spreadsheet, or, if that is not possible; (2) in .pdf format, without any “portfolios” or “embedded files.” Portfolios and embedded files within files are not readily-accessible. Please do not provide the records in a single, or “batched,” .pdf file. We appreciate the inclusion of an index.

### **RECORD DELIVERY**

We appreciate your help in expeditiously obtaining a determination on the requested records. As mandated in FOIA, we anticipate a reply within 20 working days, 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i). Failure to comply within the statutory timeframe may result in Sierra Club filing an action before the relevant U.S. District Court to ensure timely receipt of the requested materials. You may email copies of the requested records to:

Ellen M. Richmond  
Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP  
560 Mission St., 27th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
415-512-4059  
Ellen.richmond@mto.com

Counsel for Sierra Club

Please send documents on a rolling basis. EPA’s search for—or deliberations concerning—certain records should not delay the production of others that EPA has already retrieved and elected to produce. *See generally* 40 C.F.R. § 2.104 (describing response deadlines).



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### **FEE WAIVER REQUEST**

I respectfully request that you waive all fees in connection with this request as provided by 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii) and 43 C.F.R. § 2.45. Sierra Club is the nation's oldest grassroots organization with more than 2.9 million members and supporters nationwide. Sierra Club is a leading non-governmental organization seeking to educate and mobilize the public on issues of environmental protection including climate change, fossil fuel energy, clean energy and clean water. Sierra Club has spent years promoting the public interest through the development of policies that protect human health and the environment, and has routinely received fee waivers under FOIA.<sup>5</sup>

FOIA was designed to provide citizens a broad right to access government records. FOIA's basic purpose is to "open agency action to the light of public scrutiny," with a focus on the public's "right to be informed about what their government is up to." *U.S. Dep't of Justice v. Reporters Comm. For Freedom of Press*, 489 U.S. 749, 773-74 (1989)(internal quotation and citations omitted). In order to provide public access to this information, FOIA's fee waiver provision requires that "[d]ocuments shall be furnished without any charge or at a [reduced] charge," if the request satisfies the standard. 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii). The 1986 fee waiver amendments were designed specifically to provide non-profit organizations such as Sierra Club access to government records without the payment of fees. *Eitlinger v. FBI*, 596 F. Supp. 867, 872 (D. Mass. 1984) (fee waiver provision intended "to prevent government agencies from using high fees to discourage certain types of requesters and requests," which are "consistently associated with requests from journalists, scholars, and non-profit public interest groups.").

As explained below, this FOIA request satisfies the factors listed in DOI's governing regulations for waiver or reduction of fees, as well as the requirements of fee waiver under the FOIA statute. FOIA provides for waiver of fees where "disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester." 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii), *see also* 43 C.F.R. § 2.45.

DOI's regulations require that fee waiver requests address and meet each of the following criteria: (1) whether the records "concern the operations or activities of the Federal government;" (2) whether "disclosure is likely to contribute to public understanding of those operations or activities, including (i) how the contents of the records are meaningfully informative; (ii) the logical connection between the content of the records and the operations or activities; and (iii) how disclosure will contribute to the understanding of a reasonably broad

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<sup>5</sup> For a recent example, see FOIA Request Reference No. EPA-HQ-2017-2172 (fee letter waiver received Jan. 9, 2017).

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audience of [interested] persons;" (iv) the requester's "identity, vocation, qualifications, and expertise regarding the requested information" and ability to disclose it; (v) the requester's ability and intent to disseminate the information; (3) how disclosure is likely to significantly contribute to the understanding of interested persons, including whether the requested information is new and not already available, or would confirm or clarify data previously released; and (4) how the public's understanding of the subject in question will be significantly enhanced by the disclosure. 43 C.F.R. § 2.48.

Each factor is satisfied here.

**1. The subject matter of the requested records concern identifiable operations and activities of the government.**

The Department of Justice FOIA guide notes that "in most cases, records possessed by a federal agency will meet [the] threshold" requirement that the records concern government activities. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, *Fees and Fee Waivers*, in DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE GUIDE TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION 27 (2013 ed.). Here, the requested records concern the interactions of high-level agency staffers, including the agency head, with external parties concerning agency business. Because Sierra Club seeks records of communications to and from top agency staff about the official business of DOI (with either a government account or a personal account), by definition the requested records concern the operations and actions of DOI.

**2. The disclosure of the requested records is likely to contribute to public understanding of Federal government operations or activities.**

**a. The content of the requested records are meaningfully informative. (43 C.F.R. 2.48(a)(2)(i).)**

Disclosure of the requested records will allow Sierra Club to convey information to the public about the communications and correspondence of the DOI Personnel, which will reflect their actions, objectives, and priorities. This is an issue of heightened public interest and concern. The DOI Personnel have a history of close alignment with fossil fuel interests and have moved to implement the President's pro-extraction agenda at the expense of public health and natural resource protection. The following list contains just a sample of the media coverage—including Sierra Club coverage—relating to the connections between the DOI Personnel and the fossil fuel industry.

- Secretary Ryan Zinke:
  - Sierra Club, Lay of the Land, Rep. Zinke: A Primer, Jan. 13, 2017, <http://www.sierraclub.org/lay-of-the-land/2017/01/rep-zinke-primer> (noting



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Zinke's opposition to reform of the coal leasing program and support for mining, drilling and fracking)

- Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt:
  - Sierra Club, Lay of the Land, David Bernhardt Could Further Tip the Scales Against Public Lands, May 1, 2017, <https://sierraclub.org/foundation/lay-of-the-land/2017/05/david-bernhardt-could-further-tip-scales-against-public-lands> (noting close ties to the oil industry)
  - Westwise, Trump Wants This Oil Lobbyist to Watch Over Public Land and Water – And His Former Clients, April 21, 2017, <https://medium.com/westwise/trump-wants-this-oil-lobbyist-to-watch-over-public-land-and-water-and-his-former-clients-2d1e97170c29> (noting conflicts of interest resulting from Bernhardt's ties to extractive industries)
- Associate Deputy Secretary James Cason:
  - Indian Country Today, Interior's James Cason Under Investigation, Sept. 14, 2007, <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/interiors-james-cason-under-examination/> ("Cason has a long history of involvement at Interior. He is among a group of current and former Interior officials from Colorado who all shared the common experience of having been advocates or lobbyists for big oil, gas, coal and mining corporations that operate on public and Indian lands.").
- Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget Scott Cameron:
  - Department of Influence,<sup>6</sup> Scott Cameron, <https://departmentofinfluence.org/person/scott-cameron/> ("Between 2013 and 2017, Cameron held several positions at various companies, including working as a senior advisor at Dawson and Associates. While he worked at Dawson and Associates, the firm lobbied for companies in extractive industries, including the Marcellus Shale Coalition, Shell Oil Company, the Mosaic Company, and the Miami-Dade Limestone Products Association.").
- Assistant Secretary for Policy Management, and Budget Susan Combs:
  - Department of Influence, Susan Combs, <https://departmentofinfluence.org/person/susan-combs/> ("Susan Combs has been a figure in Texas politics for decades and has consistently worked to undermine the Endangered Species Act. . . . Since 2015, Combs has worked as a 'Principal' at the Maravillas Group and has been a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a right-wing think tank that has received significant funding from ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips, Devon Energy, and Koch brother affiliates.")

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<sup>6</sup> Department of Influence is a DOI research site compiled by Western Values Project: <https://departmentofinfluence.org/about-us/> <https://departmentofinfluence.org/about-us/>.

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In light of these facts, Sierra Club and its members and supporters are extremely concerned that the DOI Personnel will use their positions within DOI to enact and/or enforce policies that benefit industry interests but ignore scientific reality, harm endangered species and other natural resources, and exacerbate global warming.<sup>7</sup> Access to records of the DOI Personnel's external communications will reveal whether they are communicating with parties tied to fossil fuel interests, shedding light on the motivations behind policy decisions within the agency.

**b. The content of the requested records is logically connected to Federal government operations or activities. (43 C.F.R. 2.48(a)(2)(ii).)**

As explained above, the content of the requested records has a logical connection to government activities; indeed, by definition records of the communications and activities of the DOI Personnel—high-level staffers within the agency—are connected to government operations or activities.

**c. Disclosure will contribute to the understanding of a reasonably broad audience. (43 C.F.R. 2.48(a)(2)(iii).)**

Disclosure of the DOI Personnel's external communications will allow Sierra Club to communicate with its 2.9 million members and supporters about the processes within DOI that are informing policy. Once the requested documents are made available, Sierra Club will analyze them and present its findings to its members and online activists and the general public in a manner that will meaningfully enhance the public's understanding of the DOI Personnel's activities.

If the DOI Personnel are in frequent contact with fossil fuel companies and other industry advocates and taking their interests into account in making policy for the Department, Sierra Club intends to make those facts known to members and the general public.

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<sup>7</sup> See generally Sierra Club, Lay of the Land, Rep. Zinke: A Primer, Jan. 13, 2017, <http://www.sierraclub.org/lay-of-the-land/2017/01/rep-zinke-primer> <http://www.sierraclub.org/lay-of-the-land/2017/01/rep-zinke-primer>, noting that "the Department of the Interior [] plays a critical role in the administration of the Endangered Species Act (ESA)" and noting concerns about science-based decisionmaking in the Department; Sierra Club, Lay of the Land, David Bernhardt Could Further Tip the Scales Against Public Lands, May 1, 2017, <https://sierraclub.org/foundation/lay-of-the-land/2017/05/david-bernhardt-could-further-tip-scales-against-public-lands> <https://sierraclub.org/foundation/lay-of-the-land/2017/05/david-bernhardt-could-further-tip-scales-against-public-lands>.



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**d. Sierra Club is well positioned to, and plans to, disclose the information to further the understanding of a broad audience about DOI's activities. (43 C.F.R. 2.48(a)(2)(iv & v).)**

Sierra Club disseminates the information it receives through FOIA requests in a variety of ways, such as: analysis and distribution to the media, distribution through publication and mailing, posting on its website, emailing and listserv distribution to our members across the U.S., and via public meetings and events.

Sierra Club publishes information about DOI policy on its website. For example, recent posts have commented on the policies of DOI under Secretary Ryan Zinke<sup>8</sup> and have commented on Deputy Secretary Bernhardt's nomination.<sup>9</sup>

The Club's website has a wide reach. Every year the Sierra Club website receives 26,298,200 unique visits and over 30 million page views; on average, the site gets 72,049 visits per day.

Sierra Club also disseminates information about public lands and DOI policy through its print communications. Sierra Magazine is a bi-monthly magazine with a printed circulation of approximately 650,000 copies. Sierra Club Insider, an electronic newsletter, is sent to nearly 3 million people twice a month. In addition, Sierra Club disseminates information obtained by FOIA requests through comments to administrative agencies, and where necessary, through the judicial system. In the past, Sierra Club has published, posted, and disseminated numerous stories on coal and coal power plants regarding their impacts on health, the environment and alternative energy. This includes information on Sierra Club's webpages, such as our Beyond Coal Campaign portal, our Clean Energies Solutions portal and our press releases.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> Sierra Club, Lay of the Land, David Bernhardt Could Further Tip the Scales Against Public Lands, May 1, 2017, <https://sierraclub.org/foundation/lay-of-the-land/2017/05/david-bernhardt-could-further-tip-scales-against-public-lands> <https://sierraclub.org/foundation/lay-of-the-land/2017/05/david-bernhardt-could-further-tip-scales-against-public-lands>; Sierra Club, Press Release, Bernhardt a Loser for Parks, Public Lands, July 24, 2017, <http://content.sierraclub.org/press-releases/2017/07/bernhardt-loser-parks-public-lands> <http://content.sierraclub.org/press-releases/2017/07/bernhardt-loser-parks-public-lands>.

<sup>10</sup> For example, Sierra Club sought information about coal export and permitting activities in Oregon via a state public records act request at the Port of Coos Bay. All correspondence is published online and has received extensive media attention from press releases on the subject. *See* Sierra Club Challenges Dirty and Dangerous Fossil Fuel Exports in Oregon, <http://content.sierraclub.org/environmentallaw/lawsuit/2013/sierra-club-challenges-dirty-and-dangerous-fossil-fuel-exports-oregon>. Sierra Club also recently publicized the results

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Sierra Club intends to share the information received from this FOIA request with the public at large, our impacted members across the country, the media and our allies who share a common interest in the operations of the Department of the Interior.

Sierra Club unquestionably has the specialized knowledge and ability to disseminate the information requested in the broad manner outlined above. Sierra Club has longstanding experience and expertise in the subject area of the FOIA requests, including issues related to government accountability and transparency, the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, climate policy, the protection of the natural environment, and the development and use of energy resources. In addition, the Club's Our Wild America campaign works to "carr[y] on the Sierra Club's long legacy of protecting America's beautiful wildlands," including work to "protect[] our public lands from mining and drilling."<sup>11</sup> The Club employs communications staff who work hard to ensure that that public is informed about the influence of fossil fuel interests in agency policy.<sup>12</sup>

**3. The disclosure is likely to significantly contribute to the understanding of a reasonably broad audience of interested persons.**

**a. The information requested is not publicly available.**

None of the information requested is publicly available; in fact, this request specifically *excludes* information that has already been released to the public.

**b. The release of the requested information will provide an important supplement to the limited information available on DOI's website.**

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of its FOIA requests regarding agency job freeze, a story that was picked up by the Washington Post. Alexander Rony, *Trump Admin Policy Leaves 700 CDC Jobs Vacant*, The Planet, <http://www.sierraclub.org/planet/2017/05/trump-admin-policies-leave-700-cdc-jobs-vacant>; Lena H. Sun, *Nearly 700 vacancies at CDC because of Trump administration's hiring freeze*, The Washington Post, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2017/05/19/nearly-700-vacancies-at-cdc-because-of-trump-administration-hiring-freeze/?utm\\_term=.6c2c70d8581e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2017/05/19/nearly-700-vacancies-at-cdc-because-of-trump-administration-hiring-freeze/?utm_term=.6c2c70d8581e).

<sup>11</sup> Sierra Club, Our Wild America, <http://content.sierraclub.org/ourwildamerica/>.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, the articles published online by Virginia Cramer, Senior Press Secretary for the Sierra Club's Our Wild America campaign. <http://www.sierraclub.org/other/authors/virginia-cramer>  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/other/authors/virginia-cramer>,



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DOI has posted on its public website the visitor logs for DOI headquarters. But there is no representation that the logs represent all of the individuals who visit senior agency staffers such as the DOI Personnel; in fact, few, if any, of the entries on the logs reflect visitors to the DOI Personnel. Nor do the logs reflect telephonic and email communications, which are likely much more frequent than communications in person. Finally, the logs do not reflect communications the DOI Personnel may have while traveling outside DOI headquarters. In short, there is no question that the logs are inadequate to inform the public of the extent of the DOI Personnel's communications with external interests.

DOI also has posted on its website redacted versions of Secretary Zinke's calendars and travel logs. Sierra Club does not object to redactions that obscure telephone numbers and similar conference call dial-in information, but is requesting copies of these materials that do not contain any other redactions. Many of the redactions appear to obscure important information about the individuals that the Secretary interacts with. For instance, in the travel logs, the "Vehicle Manifest" and "Elevator Manifest" information is redacted, as in the example below.<sup>13</sup> Assuming the redactions obscure information about which individuals traveled with (and thus had private access to) the Secretary, Sierra Club requests that information.

8:38-9:50pm MST: Depart Airport en route RON  
Location: 409 2nd Street West  
Whitefish, MT 59937  
Vehicle Manifest:   
Drive Time: ~20 minutes without traffic

**4. The disclosure will contribute significantly to public understanding of government operations or activities.**

As discussed in section (2) above, the records requested will significantly contribute to the public understanding of governmental operations and activities. Disclosure of the DOI Personnel's communications and other interactions with outside parties will significantly enhance the public's understanding of whether the DOI Personnel is giving due attention to public interest in advancing the stated mission of DOI or is allowing a more narrow set of interests, such as those of the fossil fuel industry, greater influence over DOI's policies.

**5. Sierra Club has no commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested**

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<sup>13</sup> From log for Thursday, March 9, 2017,  
<https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/17-001059ca.pdf>  
<https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/17-001059ca.pdf>, at page 3.